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SPOTTED HORSES

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

William Faulkner, because of his latest novel, "Sanctuary," has been hailed as a man of genius —but a genius of terror, hatred, darkness. This new story shows the other side of his talent. The same truthfulness is turned to the uses of extravagant fun. "Spotted Horses" is a work of native American humor—a tall tale with implications of tragedy, a hilarious story of Flem Snopes, rural financial genius, corrupting a Mississippi town with Texas horses.

Yes, sir. Flem Snopes has filled that whole country full of spotted horses. You can hear folks running them all day and all night, whooping and hollering, and the horses running back and forth across them little wooden bridges ever now and then kind of like thunder. Here I was this morning pretty near half way to town, with the team ambling along and me setting in the buckboard about half asleep, when all of a sudden something come swurging up outen the bushes and jumped the road clean, without touching hoof to it. It flew right over my team, big as a billboard and flying through the air like a hawk. It taken me thirty minutes to stop my team and untangle the harness and the buckboard and hitch them up again.

That Flem Snopes. I be dog if he ain't a case, now. One morning about ten years ago, the boys was just getting settled down on Varner's porch for a little talk and tobacco, when here come Flem out from behind the counter, with his coat off and his hair all parted, like he might have been clerking for Varner for ten years already. Folks all knowed him; it was a big family of them about five miles down the bottom. That year, at least. Share-cropping. They never stayed on any place over a year. Then they would move on to another place, with the chap or maybe the twins of that year's litter. It was a regular nest of them. But Flem. The rest of them stayed tenant farmers, moving ever year, but here come Flem one day, walking out from behind Jody Varner's counter like he owned it. And he wasn't there but a year or two before folks knowed

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that, if him and Jody was both still in that store in ten years more, it would be Jody clerking for Flem Snopes. Why, that fellow could make a nickel where it wasn't but four cents to begin with. He skun me in two trades, myself, and the fellow that can do that, I just hope he'll get rich before I do; that's all.

All right. So here Flem was, clerking at Varner's, making a nickel here and there and not telling nobody about it. No, sir. Folks never knowed when Flem got the better of somebody lessen the fellow he beat told it. He'd just set there in the store-chair, chewing his tobacco and keeping his own business to hisself, until about a week later we'd find out it was somebody else's business he was keeping to hisself—provided the fellow he trimmed was mad enough to tell it. That's Flem.

We give him ten years to own ever thing Jody Varner had. But he never waited no ten years. I reckon you-all know that gal of Uncle Billy Varner's, the youngest one; Eula. Jody's sister. Ever Sunday ever yellow-wheeled buggy and curried riding horse in that country would be hitched to Bill Varner's fence, and the young bucks setting on the porch, swarming around Eula like bees around a honey pot. One of these here kind of big, soft-looking gals that could giggle richer than plowed newground. Wouldn't none of them leave before the others, and so they would set there on the porch until time to go home, with some of them with nine and ten miles to ride and then get up tomorrow and go back to the field. So they would all leave together and they would ride in a clump down to the creek ford and hitch them curried horses and yellow-wheeled buggies and get out and fight one another. Then they would get in the buggies again and go on home.

Well, one day about a year ago, one of them yellow-wheeled buggies and one of them curried saddle-horses quit this country. We heard they was heading for Texas. The next day Uncle Billy and Eula and Flem come in to town in Uncle Bill's surrey, and when they come back, Flem and Eula was married. And on the next day we heard that two more of them yellow-wheeled buggies had left the country. They mought have gone to Texas, too. It's a big place.

Anyway, about a month after the wedding, Flem and Eula went to Texas, too. They was gone pretty near a year. Then one day last month, Eula come back, with a baby. We figgered up, and we decided that it was as well-growed a three-months-old baby as we ever see. It can already pull up on a chair. I reckon Texas makes big men quick, being a big place. Anyway, if it keeps on like it started, it'll be chewing tobacco and voting time it's eight years old.

And so last Friday here come Flem himself. He was on a wagon with another fellow. The other fellow had one of these two-gallon hats and a ivory-handled pistol and a box of ginger snaps sticking out of his hind pocket, and tied to the tail-gate of the wagon was about two dozen of them Texas ponies, hitched to one another with barbed wire. They was colored like parrots and they was quiet as doves, and ere a one of them would kill you quick as a rattlesnake. Nere a one of them had two eyes the same color, and nere a one of them had ever see a bridle, I reckon; and when that Texas man got down offen the wagon and walked up to them to show how gentle they was, one of them cut his vest clean offen him, same as with a razor.

Flem had done already disappeared; he had went on to see his wife, I reckon, and to see if that ere baby had done gone on to the field to help Uncle Billy plow, maybe. It was the Texas man that taken the horses on to Mrs. Littlejohn's lot.

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He had a little trouble at first, when they come to the gate, because they hadn't never see a fence before, and when he finally got them in and taken a pair of wire cutters and unhitched them and got them into the barn and poured some shell corn into the trough, they durn nigh tore down the barn. I reckon they thought that shell corn was bugs, maybe. So he left them in the lot and he announced that the auction would begin at sunup to-morrow.

That night we was setting on Mrs. Littlejohn's porch. You-all mind the moon was nigh full that night, and we could watch them spotted varmints swirling along the fence and back and forth across the lot same as minnows in a pond. And then now and then they would all kind of huddle up against the barn and rest themselves by biting and kicking one another. We would hear a squeal, and then a set of hoofs would go Bam! against the barn, like a pistol. It sounded just like a fellow with a pistol, in a nest of cattymounts, taking his time.

II

It wasn't ere a man knowed yet if Flem owned them things or not. They just knowed one thing: that they wasn't never going to know for sho if Flem did or not, or if maybe he didn't just get on that wagon at the edge of town, for the ride or not. Even Eck Snopes didn't know, Flem's own cousin. But wasn't nobody surprised at that. We knowed that Flem would skin Eck quick as he would ere a one of us.

They was there by sunup next morning, some of them come twelve and sixteen miles, with seed-money tied up in tobacco sacks in their overalls, standing along the fence, when the Texas man come out of Mrs. Littlejohn's after breakfast and clumb onto the gate post with that ere white pistol butt sticking outen his hind pocket. He taken a new box of gingersnaps outen his pocket and bit the end offen it like a cigar and spit out the paper, and said the auction was open. And still they was coming up in wagons and a horse- and mule-back and hitching the teams across the road and coming to the fence. Flem wasn't nowhere in sight.

But he couldn't get them started. He begun to work on Eck, because Eck holp him last night to get them into the barn and feed them that shell corn. Eck got out just in time. He come outen that barn like a chip on the crest of a busted dam of water, and clumb into the wagon just in time.

He was working on Eck when Henry Armstid come up in his wagon. Eck was saying he was skeered to bid on one of them, because he might get it, and the Texas man says, "Them ponies? Them little horses?" He clumb down offen the gate post and went toward the horses. They broke and run, and him following them, kind of chirping to them, with his hand out like he was fixing to catch a fly, until he got three or four of them cornered. Then he jumped into them, and then we couldn't see nothing for a while because of the dust. It was a big cloud of it, and them blare-eyed, spotted things swoaring outen it twenty foot to a jump, in forty directions without counting up. Then the dust settled and there they was, that Texas man and the horse. He had its head twisted clean around like a owl's head. Its legs was braced and it was trembling like a new bride and groaning like a saw mill, and him holding its head wrung clean around on its neck so it was snuffing sky. "Look it over," he says, with his heels dug too and that white pistol sticking outen his pocket and his neck swole up like a spreading adder's until you could just tell what he was saying, cussing the horse and talk-

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ing to us all at once: "Look him over, the fiddle-headed son of fourteen fathers. Try him, buy him; you will get the best—" Then it was all dust again, and we couldn't see nothing but spotted hide and mane, and that ere Texas man's boot-heels like a couple of walnuts on two strings, and after a while that two-gallon hat come sailing out like a fat old hen crossing a fence.

When the dust settled again, he was just getting outen the far fence corner, brushing himself off. He come and got his hat and brushed it off and come and clumb onto the gate post again. He was breathing hard. He taken the ginger-snap box outen his pocket and et one, breathing hard. The hammer-head horse was still running round and round the lot like a merry-go-round at a fair. That was when Henry Armstid come shoving up to the gate in them patched overalls and one of them dangle-armed shirts of hisn. Hadn't nobody noticed him until then. We was all watching the Texas man and the horses. Even Mrs. Littlejohn; she had done come out and built a fire under the wash-pot in her back yard, and she would stand at the fence a while and then go back into the house and come out again with a arm full of wash and stand at the fence again. Well, here come Henry shoving up, and then we see Mrs. Armstid right behind him, in that ere faded wrapper and sunbonnet and them tennis shoes. "Git on back to that wagon," Henry says.

"Henry," she says.

"Here, boys," the Texas man says; "make room for missus to git up and see. Come on, Henry," he says; "here's your chance to buy that saddle-horse missus has been wanting. What about ten dollars, Henry?"

"Henry," Mrs. Armstid says. She put her hand on Henry's arm. Henry knocked her hand down.

"Git on back to that wagon, like I told you," he says.

Mrs. Armstid never moved. She stood behind Henry, with her hands rolled into her dress, not looking at nothing. "He hain't no more despair than to buy one of them things," she says. "And us not five dollars ahead of the pore house, he hain't no more despair." It was the truth, too. They ain't never made more than a bare living offen that place of theirs, and them with four chaps and the very clothes they wears she earns by weaving by the firelight at night while Henry's asleep.

"Shut your mouth and git on back to that wagon," Henry says. "Do you want I taken a wagon stake to you here in the big road?"

Well, that Texas man taken one look at her. Then he begun on Eck again, like Henry wasn't even there. But Eck was skeered. "I can git me a snapping turtle or a water moccasin for nothing. I ain't going to buy none."

So the Texas man said he would give Eck a horse. "To start the auction, and because you holp me last night. If you'll start the bidding on the next horse," he says, "I'll give you that fiddle-head horse."

I wish you could have seen them, standing there with their seed-money in their pockets, watching that Texas man give Eck Snopes a live horse, all fixed to call him a fool if he taken it or not. Finally Eck says he'll take it. "Only I just starts the bidding," he says. "I don't have to buy the next one lessen I ain't overtopped." The Texas man said all right, and Eck bid a dollar on the next one, with Henry Armstid standing there with his mouth already open, watching Eck and the Texas man like a mad-dog or something. "A dollar," Eck says.

The Texas man looked at Eck. His mouth was already open too, like he had started to say something and what he

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was going to say had up and died on him. "A dollar?" he says. "One dollar? You mean, *one* dollar, Eck?"

"Durn it," Eck says; "two dollars, then."

Well, sir, I wish you could a seen that Texas man. He taken out that ginger-snap box and held it up and looked into it, careful, like it might have been a diamond ring in it, or a spider. Then he throwed it away and wiped his face with a bandanna. "Well," he says. "Well. Two dollars. Two dollars. Is your pulse all right, Eck?" he says. "Do you have ager-sweats at night, maybe?" he says. "Well," he says, "I got to take it. But are you boys going to stand there and see Eck get two horses at a dollar a head?"

That done it. I be dog if he wasn't nigh as smart as Flem Snopes. He hadn't no more than got the words outen his mouth before here was Henry Armstid, waving his hand. "Three dollars," Henry says. Mrs. Armstid tried to hold him again. He knocked her hand off, shoving up to the gate post.

"Mister," Mrs. Armstid says, "we got chaps in the house and not corn to feed the stock. We got five dollars I earned my chaps a-weaving after dark, and him snoring in the bed. And he hain't no more despair."

"Henry bids three dollars," the Texas man says. "Raise him a dollar, Eck, and the horse is yours."

"Henry," Mrs. Armstid says.

"Raise him, Eck," the Texas man says.

"Four dollars," Eck says.

"Five dollars," Henry says, shaking his fist. He shoved up right under the gate post. Mrs. Armstid was looking at the Texas man too.

"Mister," she says, "if you take that five dollars I earned my chaps a-weaving for one of them things, it'll be a curse onto you and yourn during all the time of man."

But it wasn't no stopping Henry. He had shoved up, waving his fist at the Texas man. He opened it; the money was in nickels and quarters, and one dollar bill that looked like a cow's cud. "Five dollars," he says. "And the man that raises it'll have to beat my head off, or I'll beat hisn."

"All right," the Texas man says. "Five dollars is bid. But don't you shake your hand at me."

III

It taken till nigh sundown before the last one was sold. He got them hotted up once and the bidding got up to seven dollars and a quarter, but most of them went around three or four dollars, him setting on the gate post and picking the horses out one at a time by mouth-word, and Mrs. Littlejohn pumping up and down at the tub and stopping and coming to the fence for a while and going back to the tub again. She had done got done too, and the wash was hung on the line in the back yard, and we could smell supper cooking. Finally they was all sold; he swapped the last two and the wagon for a buckboard.

We was all kind of tired, but Henry Armstid looked more like a mad-dog than ever. When he bought, Mrs. Armstid had went back to the wagon, setting in it behind them two rabbit-sized, bone-pore mules, and the wagon itself looking like it would fall all to pieces soon as the mules moved. Henry hadn't even waited to pull it outen the road; it was still in the middle of the road and her setting in it, not looking at nothing, ever since this morning.

Henry was right up against the gate. He went up to the Texas man. "I bought a horse and I paid cash," Henry says. "And yet you expect me to stand around here until they are all sold before I can get my horse. I'm going to take my horse outen that lot."

The Texas man looked at Henry. He

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talked like he might have been asking for a cup of coffee at the table. "Take your horse," he says.

Then Henry quit looking at the Texas man. He begun to swallow, holding onto the gate. "Ain't you going to help me?" he says.

"It ain't my horse," the Texas man says.

Henry never looked at the Texas man again, he never looked at nobody. "Who'll help me catch my horse?" he says. Never nobody said nothing. "Bring the plowline," Henry says. Mrs. Armstid got outen the wagon and brought the plowline. The Texas man got down offen the post. The woman made to pass him, carrying the rope.

"Don't you go in there, missus," the Texas man says.

Henry opened the gate. He didn't look back. "Come on here," he says.

"Don't you go in there, missus," the Texas man says.

Mrs. Armstid wasn't looking at nobody, neither, with her hands across her middle, holding the rope. "I reckon I better," she says. Her and Henry went into the lot. The horses broke and run. Henry and Mrs. Armstid followed.

"Get him into the corner," Henry says. They got Henry's horse cornered finally, and Henry taken the rope, but Mrs. Armstid let the horse get out. They hemmed it up again, but Mrs. Armstid let it get out again, and Henry turned and hit her with the rope. "Why didn't you head him back?" Henry says. He hit her again. "Why didn't you?" It was about that time I looked around and see Flem Snopes standing there.

It was the Texas man that done something. He moved fast for a big man. He caught the rope before Henry could hit the third time, and Henry whirled and made like he would jump at the Texas man. But he never jumped. The Texas man went and taken Henry's arm and led him outen the lot. Mrs. Armstid come behind them and the Texas man taken some money outen his pocket and he give it into Mrs. Armstid's hand. "Get him into the wagon and take him on home," the Texas man says, like he might have been telling them he enjoyed his supper.

Then here come Flem. "What's that for, Buck?" Flem says.

"Thinks he bought one of them ponies," the Texas man says. "Get him on away, missus."

But Henry wouldn't go. "Give him back that money," he says. "I bought that horse and I aim to have him if I have to shoot him."

And there was Flem, standing there with his hands in his pockets, chewing, like he had just happened to be passing.

"You take your money and I take my horse," Henry says. "Give it back to him," he says to Mrs. Armstid.

"You don't own no horse of mine," the Texas man says. "Get him on home, missus."

Then Henry seen Flem. "You got something to do with these horses," he says. "I bought one. Here's the money for it." He taken the bill outen Mrs. Armstid's hand. He offered it to Flem. "I bought one. Ask him. Here. Here's the money," he says, giving the bill to Flem.

When Flem taken the money, the Texas man dropped the rope he had snatched outen Henry's hand. He had done sent Eck Snopes's boy up to the store for another box of gingersnaps, and he taken the box outen his pocket and looked into it. It was empty and he dropped it on the ground. "Mr. Snopes will have your money for you to-morrow," he says to Mrs. Armstid. "You can get it from him to-morrow. He don't own no horse. You get him into the wagon and get him on home." Mrs. Armstid went back to the wagon and

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got in. "Where's that ere buckboard I bought?" the Texas man says. It was after sundown then. And then Mrs. Littlejohn come out on the porch and rung the supper bell.

IV

I come on in and et supper. Mrs. Littlejohn would bring in a pan of bread or something, then she would go out to the porch a minute and come back and tell us. The Texas man had hitched his team to the buckboard he had swapped them last two horses for, and him and Flem had gone, and then she told that the rest of them that never had ropes had went back to the store with I. O. Snopes to get some ropes, and wasn't nobody at the gate but Henry Armstid, and Mrs. Armstid setting in the wagon in the road, and Eck Snopes and that boy of hisn. "I don't care how many of them fool men gets killed by them things," Mrs. Littlejohn says, "but I ain't going to let Eck Snopes take that boy into that lot again." So she went down to the gate, but she come back without the boy or Eck neither.

"It ain't no need to worry about that boy," I says. "He's charmed." He was right behind Eck last night when Eck went to help feed them. The whole drove of them jumped clean over that boy's head and never touched him. It was Eck that touched him. Eck snatched him into the wagon and taken a rope and frailed the tar outen him.

So I had done et and went to my room and was undressing, long as I had a long trip to make next day; I was trying to sell a machine to Mrs. Bundren up past Whiteleaf; when Henry Armstid opened that gate and went in by hisself. They couldn't make him wait for the balance of them to get back with their ropes. Eck Snopes said he tried to make Henry wait, but Henry wouldn't do it. Eck said Henry walked right up to them and that when they broke, they run clean over Henry like a hay-mow breaking down. Eck said he snatched that boy of hisn out of the way just in time and that them things went through that gate like a creek flood and into the wagons and teams hitched side the road, busting wagon tongues and snapping harness like it was fishing-line, with Mrs. Armstid still setting in their wagon in the middle of it like something carved outen wood. Then they scattered, wild horses and tame mules with pieces of harness and single trees dangling offen them, both ways up and down the road.

"There goes ourn, paw!" Eck says his boy said. "There it goes, into Mrs. Littlejohn's house." Eck says it run right up the steps and into the house like a boarder late for supper. I reckon so. Anyway, I was in my room, in my underclothes, with one sock on and one sock in my hand, leaning out the window when the commotion busted out, when I heard something run into the melodeon in the hall; it sounded like a railroad engine. Then the door to my room come sailing in like when you throw a tin bucket top into the wind and I looked over my shoulder and see something that looked like a fourteen-foot pinwheel a-blaring its eyes at me. It had to blare them fast, because I was already done jumped out the window.

I reckon it was anxious, too. I reckon it hadn't never seen barbed wire or shell corn before, but I know it hadn't never seen underclothes before, or maybe it was a sewing-machine agent it hadn't never seen. Anyway, it swirled and turned to run back up the hall and outen the house, when it met Eck Snopes and that boy just coming in, carrying a rope. It swirled again and run down the hall and out the back door just in time to meet Mrs. Littlejohn. She had just gathered up the clothes she had washed,

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and she was coming onto the back porch with a armful of washing in one hand and a scrubbing-board in the other, when the horse skidded up to her, trying to stop and swirl again. It never taken Mrs. Littlejohn no time a-tall.

"Git outen here, you son," she says. She hit it across the face with the scrubbing-board; that ere scrubbing-board split as neat as ere a axe could have done it, and when the horse swirled to run back up the hall, she hit it again with what was left of the scrubbing-board, not on the head this time. "And stay out," she says.

Eck and that boy was half-way down the hall by this time. I reckon that horse looked like a pinwheel to Eck too. "Git to hell outen here, Ad!" Eck says. Only there wasn't time. Eck dropped flat on his face, but the boy never moved. The boy was about a yard tall maybe, in overhalls just like Eck's; that horse swoared over his head without touching a hair. I saw that, because I was just coming back up the front steps, still carrying that ere sock and still in my underclothes, when the horse come onto the porch again. It taken one look at me and swirled again and run to the end of the porch and jumped the banisters and the lot fence like a hen-hawk and lit in the lot running and went out the gate again and jumped eight or ten upside-down wagons and went on down the road. It was a full moon then. Mrs. Armstid was still setting in the wagon like she had done been carved outen wood and left there and forgot.

That horse. It ain't never missed a lick. It was going about forty miles a hour when it come to the bridge over the creek. It would have had a clear road, but it so happened that Vernon Tull was already using the bridge when it got there. He was coming back from town; he hadn't heard about the auction; him and his wife and three daughters and Mrs. Tull's aunt, all setting in chairs in the wagon bed, and all asleep, including the mules. They waked up when the horse hit the bridge one time, but Tull said the first he knew was when the mules tried to turn the wagon around in the middle of the bridge and he seen that spotted varmint run right twixt the mules and run up the wagon tongue like a squirrel. He said he just had time to hit it across the face with his whip-stock, because about that time the mules turned the wagon around on that ere one-way bridge and that horse clumb across one of the mules and jumped down onto the bridge again and went on, with Vernon standing up in the wagon and kicking at it.

Tull said the mules turned in the harness and clumb back into the wagon too, with Tull trying to beat them out again, with the reins wrapped around his wrist. After that he says all he seen was overturned chairs and womenfolks' legs and white drawers shining in the moonlight, and his mules and that spotted horse going on up the road like a ghost.

The mules jerked Tull outen the wagon and drug him a spell on the bridge before the reins broke. They thought at first that he was dead, and while they was kneeling around him, picking the bridge splinters outen him, here come Eck and that boy, still carrying the rope. They was running and breathing a little hard. "Where'd he go?" Eck says.

V

I went back and got my pants and shirt and shoes on just in time to go and help get Henry Armstid outen the trash in the lot. I be dog if he didn't look like he was dead, with his head hanging back and his teeth showing in the moonlight, and a little rim of white under his eyelids. We could still hear them horses, here and there; hadn't none of them got more than four—five miles away yet,

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not knowing the country, I reckon. So we could hear them and folks yelling now and then: "Whooey. Head him!"

We toted Henry into Mrs. Littlejohn's. She was in the hall; she hadn't put down the armful of clothes. She taken one look at us, and she laid down the busted scrubbing-board and taken up the lamp and opened a empty door. "Bring him in here," she says.

We toted him in and laid him on the bed. Mrs. Littlejohn set the lamp on the dresser, still carrying the clothes. "I'll declare, you men," she says. Our shadows was way up the wall, tiptoeing too; we could hear ourselves breathing. "Better get his wife," Mrs. Littlejohn says. She went out, carrying the clothes.

"I reckon we had," Quick says. "Go get her, somebody."

"Whyn't you go?" Winterbottom says.

"Let Ernest git her," Durley says. "He lives neighbors with them."

Ernest went to fetch her. I be dog if Henry didn't look like he was dead. Mrs. Littlejohn come back, with a kettle and some towels. She went to work on Henry, and then Mrs. Armstid and Ernest come in. Mrs. Armstid come to the foot of the bed and stood there, with her hands rolled into her apron, watching what Mrs. Littlejohn was doing, I reckon.

"You men get outen the way," Mrs. Littlejohn says. "Git outside," she says. "See if you can't find something else to play with that will kill some more of you."

"Is he dead?" Winterbottom says.

"It ain't your fault if he ain't," Mrs. Littlejohn says. "Go tell Will Varner to come up here. I reckon a man ain't so different from a mule, come long come short. Except maybe a mule's got more sense."

We went to get Uncle Billy. It was a full moon. We could hear them, now and then, four mile away: "Whooey. Head him." The country was full of them, one on ever wooden bridge in the land, running across it like thunder: "Whooey. There he goes. Head him."

We hadn't got far before Henry begun to scream. I reckon Mrs. Littlejohn's water had brung him to; anyway, he wasn't dead. We went on to Uncle Billy's. The house was dark. We called to him, and after a while the window opened and Uncle Billy put his head out, peart as a peckerwood, listening. "Are they still trying to catch them durn rabbits?" he says.

He come down, with his britches on over his night-shirt and his suspenders dangling, carrying his horse-doctoring grip. "Yes, sir," he says, cocking his head like a woodpecker; "they're still a-trying."

We could hear Henry before we reached Mrs. Littlejohn's. He was going Ah-Ah-Ah. We stopped in the yard. Uncle Billy went on in. We could hear Henry. We stood in the yard, hearing them on the bridges, this-a-way and that: "Whooey. Whooey."

"Eck Snopes ought to caught hisn," Ernest says.

"Looks like he ought," Winterbottom said.

Henry was going Ah-Ah-Ah steady in the house; then he begun to scream. "Uncle Billy's started," Quick says. We looked into the hall. We could see the light where the door was. Then Mrs. Littlejohn come out.

"Will needs some help," she says. "You, Ernest. You'll do." Ernest went into the house.

"Hear them?" Quick said. "That one was on Four Mile bridge." We could hear them; it sounded like thunder a long way off; it didn't last long:

"Whooey."

We could hear Henry: "Ah-Ah-Ah-Ah-Ah."

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"They are both started now," Winterbottom says. "Ernest too."

That was early in the night. Which was a good thing, because it taken a long night for folks to chase them things right and for Henry to lay there and holler, being as Uncle Billy never had none of this here chloryfoam to set Henry's leg with. So it was considerate in Flem to get them started early. And what do you reckon Flem's com-ment was?

That's right. Nothing. Because he wasn't there. Hadn't nobody see him since that Texas man left.

VI

That was Saturday night. I reckon Mrs. Armstid got home about daylight, to see about the chaps. I don't know where they thought her and Henry was. But lucky the oldest one was a gal, about twelve, big enough to take care of the little ones. Which she did for the next two days. Mrs. Armstid would nurse Henry all night and work in the kitchen for hern and Henry's keep, and in the afternoon she would drive home (it was about four miles) to see to the chaps. She would cook up a pot of victuals and leave it on the stove, and the gal would bar the house and keep the little ones quiet. I would hear Mrs. Littlejohn and Mrs. Armstid talking in the kitchen. "How are the chaps making out?" Mrs. Littlejohn says.

"All right," Mrs. Armstid says.

"Don't they git skeered at night?" Mrs. Littlejohn says.

"Ina May bars the door when I leave," Mrs. Armstid says. "She's got the axe in bed with her. I reckon she can make out."

I reckon they did. And I reckon Mrs. Armstid was waiting for Flem to come back to town; hadn't nobody seen him until this morning; to get her money the Texas man said Flem was keeping for her. Sho. I reckon she was.

Anyway, I heard Mrs. Armstid and Mrs. Littlejohn talking in the kitchen this morning while I was eating breakfast. Mrs. Littlejohn had just told Mrs. Armstid that Flem was in town. "You can ask him for that five dollars," Mrs. Littlejohn says.

"You reckon he'll give it to me?" Mrs. Armstid says.

Mrs. Littlejohn was washing dishes, washing them like a man, like they was made out of iron. "No," she says. "But asking him won't do no hurt. It might shame him. I don't reckon it will, but it might."

"If he wouldn't give it back, it ain't no use to ask," Mrs. Armstid says.

"Suit yourself," Mrs. Littlejohn says. "It's your money."

I could hear the dishes.

"Do you reckon he might give it back to me?" Mrs. Armstid says. "That Texas man said he would. He said I could get it from Mr. Snopes later."

"Then go and ask him for it," Mrs. Littlejohn says.

I could hear the dishes.

"He won't give it back to me," Mrs. Armstid says.

"All right," Mrs. Littlejohn says. "Don't ask him for it, then."

I could hear the dishes; Mrs. Armstid was helping. "You don't reckon he would, do you?" she says. Mrs. Littlejohn never said nothing. It sounded like she was throwing the dishes at one another. "Maybe I better go and talk to Henry about it," Mrs. Armstid says.

"I would," Mrs. Littlejohn says. I be dog if it didn't sound like she had two plates in her hands, beating them together. "Then Henry can buy another five-dollar horse with it. Maybe he'll buy one next time that will out and out kill him. If I thought that, I'd give you back the money, myself."

"I reckon I better talk to him first," Mrs. Armstid said. Then it sounded like

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Mrs. Littlejohn taken up all the dishes and throwed them at the cook-stove, and I come away.

That was this morning. I had been up to Bundren's and back, and I thought that things would have kind of settled down. So after breakfast, I went up to the store. And there was Flem, setting in the store chair and whittling, like he might not have ever moved since he come to clerk for Jody Varner. I. O. was leaning in the door, in his shirt sleeves and with his hair parted too, same as Flem was before he turned the clerking job over to I. O. It's a funny thing about them Snopes: they all looks alike, yet there ain't ere a two of them that claims brothers. They're always just cousins, like Flem and Eck and Flem and I. O. Eck was there too, squatting against the wall, him and that boy, eating cheese and crackers outen a sack; they told me that Eck hadn't been home a-tall. And that Lon Quick hadn't got back to town, even. He followed his horse clean down to Samson's Bridge, with a wagon and a camp outfit. Eck finally caught one of hisn. It run into a blind lane at Freeman's and Eck and the boy taken and tied their rope across the end of the lane, about three foot high. The horse come to the end of the lane and whirled and run back without ever stopping. Eck says it never seen the rope a-tall. He says it looked just like one of these here Christmas pinwheels. "Didn't it try to run again?" I says.

"No," Eck says, eating a bite of cheese offen his knife blade. "Just kicked some."

"Kicked some?" I says.

"It broke its neck," Eck says.

Well, they was squatting there, about six of them, talking, talking at Flem; never nobody knowed yet if Flem had ere a interest in them horses or not. So finally I come right out and asked him. "Flem's done skun all of us so much," I says, "that we're proud of him. Come on, Flem," I says, "how much did you and that Texas man make offen them horses? You can tell us. Ain't nobody here but Eck that bought one of them; the others ain't got back to town yet, and Eck's your own cousin; he'll be proud to hear, too. How much did you-all make?"

They was all whittling, not looking at Flem, making like they was studying. But you could a heard a pin drop. And I. O. He had been rubbing his back up and down on the door, but he stopped now, watching Flem like a pointing dog. Flem finished cutting the sliver offen his stick. He spit across the porch, into the road. " 'Twarn't none of my horses," he says.

I. O. cackled, like a hen, slapping his legs with both hands. "You boys might just as well quit trying to get ahead of Flem," he said.

Well, about that time I see Mrs. Armstid come outen Mrs. Littlejohn's gate, coming up the road. I never said nothing. I says, "Well, if a man can't take care of himself in a trade, he can't blame the man that trims him."

Flem never said nothing, trimming at the stick. He hadn't seen Mrs. Armstid. "Yes, sir," I says. "A fellow like Henry Armstid ain't got nobody but hisself to blame."

"Course he ain't," I. O. says. He ain't seen her, neither. "Henry Armstid's a born fool. Always is been. If Flem hadn't a got his money, somebody else would."

We looked at Flem. He never moved. Mrs. Armstid come on up the road.

"That's right," I says. "But, come to think of it, Henry never bought no horse." We looked at Flem; you could a heard a match drop. "That Texas man told her to get that five dollars back from Flem next day. I reckon Flem's done already taken that money to Mrs.

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Littlejohn's and give it to Mrs. Armstid."

We watched Flem. I. O. quit rubbing his back against the door again. After a while Flem raised his head and spit across the porch, into the dust. I. O. cackled, just like a hen. "Ain't he a beating fellow, now?" I. O. says.

Mrs. Armstid was getting closer, so I kept on talking, watching to see if Flem would look up and see her. But he never looked up. I went on talking about Tull, about how he was going to sue Flem, and Flem setting there, whittling his stick, not saying nothing else after he said they wasn't none of his horses.

Then I. O. happened to look around. He seen Mrs. Armstid. "Psssst!" he says. Flem looked up. "Here she comes!" I. O. says. "Go out the back. I'll tell her you done went in to town to-day."

But Flem never moved. He just set there, whittling, and we watched Mrs. Armstid come up onto the porch, in that ere faded sunbonnet and wrapper and them tennis shoes that made a kind of hissing noise on the porch. She come onto the porch and stopped, her hands rolled into her dress in front, not looking at nothing.

"He said Saturday," she says, "that he wouldn't sell Henry no horse. He said I could get the money from you."

Flem looked up. The knife never stopped. It went on trimming off a sliver same as if he was watching it. "He taken that money off with him when he left," Flem says.

Mrs. Armstid never looked at nothing. We never looked at her, neither, except that boy of Eck's. He had a half-et cracker in his hand, watching her, chewing.

"He said Henry hadn't bought no horse," Mrs. Armstid says. "He said for me to get the money from you to-day."

"I reckon he forgot about it," Flem said. "He taken that money off with him Saturday." He whittled again. I. O. kept on rubbing his back, slow. He licked his lips. After a while the woman looked up the road, where it went on up the hill, toward the graveyard. She looked up that way for a while, with that boy of Eck's watching her and I. O. rubbing his back slow against the door. Then she turned back toward the steps.

"I reckon it's time to get dinner started," she says.

"How's Henry this morning, Mrs. Armstid?" Winterbottom says.

She looked at Winterbottom; she almost stopped. "He's resting, I thank you kindly," she says.

Flem got up, outen the chair, putting his knife away. He spit across the porch. "Wait a minute, Mrs. Armstid," he says. She stopped again. She didn't look at him. Flem went on into the store, with I. O. done quit rubbing his back now, with his head craned after Flem, and Mrs. Armstid standing there with her hands rolled into her dress, not looking at nothing. A wagon come up the road and passed; it was Freeman, on the way to town. Then Flem come out again, with I. O. still watching him. Flem had one of these little striped sacks of Jody Varner's candy; I bet he still owns Jody that nickel, too. He put the sack into Mrs. Armstid's hand, like he would have put it into a hollow stump. He spit again across the porch. "A little sweetening for the chaps," he says.

"You're right kind," Mrs. Armstid says. She held the sack of candy in her hand, not looking at nothing. Eck's boy was watching the sack, the half-et cracker in his hand; he wasn't chewing now. He watched Mrs. Armstid roll the sack into her apron. "I reckon I better get on back and help with dinner," she says. She turned and went back across the porch. Flem set down in the chair again and opened his knife. He spit across the

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porch again, past Mrs. Armstid where she hadn't went down the steps yet. Then she went on, in that ere sunbonnet and wrapper all the same color, back down the road toward Mrs. Littlejohn's. You couldn't see her dress move, like a natural woman walking. She looked like a old snag still standing up and moving along on a high water. We watched her turn in at Mrs. Littlejohn's and go outen sight. Flem was whittling. I. O. begun to rub his back on the door. Then he begun to cackle, just like a durn hen.

"You boys might just as well quit trying," I. O. says. "You can't git ahead of Flem. You can't touch him. Ain't he a sight, now?"

I be dog if he ain't. If I had brung a herd of wild cattymounts into town and sold them to my neighbors and kinfolks, they would have lynched me. Yes, sir.

Building of the Hudson River Bridge

By John Gould Fletcher

Theorem made of steel
Linking earth, water, sky,
In poised self-organized appeal,
Amid the droning myriads that daily strive and die;

Casting back still on time
The memory of that face
That out of thickets peered, when once did climb
The wild grape-cables twining in this place

From tree to tree in air
Aerial hammocks, until Hudson drew
More near to them and could their strength declare;
Him and his mutinous crew,

Now time has whelmed: from towers that steeper are
Than ancient Babel's, now the appalling weight
Of gray steel tentacles you stretch out afar
To the opposing shore, to bear a human freight.

Night's gulf beneath, you span
With outflung gesture, dwarfing by your scale
Nature by the titanic schemes of man
Who crawls along you, puny wisp and frail:

Nor could the Gods disdain
To own you if their will be, ere time close,
To guide across the void our feet that pain
Up through the darkness, seeking what none knows:—

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Some superhuman law
Fluctuant as water, flexible as wind,
Poised as an ark of awe
Above the flood, to justify mankind:

One road 'twixt thought and dream,
Will and desire, free effort and fixed power;
Fire frozen to a force beyond fire's gleam:
Through man transcending yet man's mortal hour.

Therefore not lightly I,
Who marvelling have marked your towers soar
From the horizon of a full-charged sky
Of hope and fear, would speak one word the more:

That we may hold you not
As emblem of our grasping and our greed,
But rather as pure symbol of our lot.
There is a bridge before us we have need

To build; a bridge whose links
Are consciousness, whose roadway faith, whose anchoring towers
Are the flesh acting and the mind that thinks:
This bridge is not so easily made ours.

Since long ago were laid
Its first stones, ere man's annals 'gan to run,
And its last length is stayed
Here in a world made every hour more one.

Unless by knowledge fire-tried and freed,
The mutterings of the savage and that mind
That scaled this steel equation fuse in a human creed,
Then there is no bridge standing: vast and blind

Cables like arms stretch gauntly through the air
From nothingness to naught; till as the last days run,
We hurl ourselves from them into the last despair:
Knowing we shall not consummate the bridge 'twixt night and sun.

Then this vain thing we schemed and strove to build,
Girder and stanchion, bolt and strut and brace,
Will rest, a black abortion unfulfilled,
To shortly take authentically its place

Where under the sunset bleeding, mad with fear,
The river blares its death-cry to the night,
And the sky's green eye stares frozen still where sheer
Black cables dredge the twinkling shoals of light.

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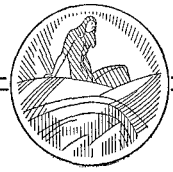

Let Us Face Death

By CLARENCE C. LITTLE

Can humanity trust itself to face death? Doctor Little, managing director of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, suggests the reasons for our fear of death and proposes that the hopelessly ill and the incurably insane be relieved of their suffering.

Is the time ripe for humanity to trust itself to be as wise, gentle, and courageous as its conscience and intellect dictate in facing the three great individual problems of birth, marriage, and death?

This question is perhaps the most important matter for us to consider to-day. Birth, marriage, and death are three vital points which, through the centuries, have tested mankind's faith in itself and in God.

The now practically universally accepted principle that all children should be wanted, planned for, expected, and cared for, seems to augur well for a truly humane and idealistic attitude toward birth on the part of future generations.

The encouragement of greater care in the choice of life partners, the practice of greater leniency toward those who have made honest mistakes in such choice, and the liberation of love between man and woman from the dirtiness which those who know nothing about it are apt to associate with it, are again in keeping with what the conscience of humanity believes to be true and good. Things seem therefore to be fast moving toward a more advanced conception of birth and marriage despite, or perhaps because of, the grim and sonorous calls from the Middle Ages which are frequently given forth by the disturbed keepers of the ritual.

Death, however, remains little cared for. Apparently we have not done what we can to encourage humanity to form a kindlier and more merciful relationship with the silent watcher. It is not because we do not need such a change. There are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people who would welcome it.

The treatment of the incurably insane, or of the hopeless idiot now kept alive in conditions often impersonal or even bestial and cruel, is a heritage from the unenlightened ages and is neither right nor Christian.

The objectives to be attained by keeping a normal and perhaps much beloved person alive through a long period of physical suffering and mental disintegration are also interesting to analyze.

Three general influences have a bearing on this question. They are personal, medical, and religious.

The first and most cogent personal reason is the knowledge that when the person is dead and buried one will not see him again on this earth. All the senses yearn for a continuation of actual contact. The knowledge that death will

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break these direct contacts produces an overpowering, selfish fear which has lasted through the centuries.

Second comes custom—habit—propriety. Even though the patient is ready to go and the family is reconciled, the opinion of one's neighbors still demands that every effort be made to prolong life and suffering literally to the last gasp. If this is not done some one might whisper that the desire to inherit property of, or to save trouble caused by, the invalid was involved.

The attitude of the medical profession toward death is complicated by the worship of that ancient fetish known as the Hippocratic oath. The solemn pledging of individuals to the terms of this statement is at base a traditional tribute to mutual distrust, and to lack of personal integrity. The sins that can be laid at its door are legion, and the qualities which keep it alive are silent and depressing confessions of the conservatism, clannishness, and lack of imagination of what should, and could, be the most delicate, imaginative, and humanitarian of all professions.

Finally, as an all-important factor, comes the pathetic and universal failure of the Church, with all its centuries of organized, highly paid salesmanship, to penetrate the heart of humanity with an abiding conviction of immortality. The Church is far from consistent in its attitude. Intermingled with an insistence on the reality of immortality is the strange pseudo-psychology of various fundamentalist denominations shared by a crude offshoot of the Nietzschean school that "Life is given to us to live through to its bitterest dregs. We should, therefore, do nothing to shorten it." A more Christian view would consider life a splendid and active adventure. We know that in nature the fading of the sunset or the disintegration of life is seldom glorious or beautiful—yet in the case of the dying we insist upon that phase grimly. When the weather is bad we hasten indoors to shelter and comfort; but when our friends and loved ones are beaten by a storm of hopeless suffering we paradoxically hold them away from the peace and rest which we —as Christians—assert that death will bring.

"While there is life there's hope" is the general slogan adopted by civilization to-day. The implication is the anti-Christian conclusion that when death finally comes there is no hope. There is a wide and impressive gap between this course of action and the beauty of the statement, "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

At present it is the prime function of the medical profession and of relatives and friends, to keep the burden of fading physical fitness strapped to the shoulders of the sufferer as long as it is humanly possible. To be sure, suffering may be alleviated by the use of personality-disintegrating drugs which dull the sensibilities to an otherwise unbearable pain. Doctors and friends fight tooth and nail to hold on to any spark of life that may remain. If the dying person might be expected to recover to a life of real activity and of joy, such efforts might be entirely justifiable. On the other hand, when medical knowledge and common sense make it clear that the patient will never again be well, the course of action, now universally adopted, is open to debate.

The church services of every Christian denomination lean heavily on "immortality." The processional and hymns declare that "The fight is o'er, the battle won; the song of triumph has begun." This is true not only at Easter, but at funerals as well, and is an attempt to convince mankind that death is not the final chapter. Yet humanity up to a few

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short years ago was never allowed, or rather never took for itself enough independence from a domineering ritualism, to convince itself of the probability of immortality. To be told by a paid representative of a propagandizing organization that its claims are true, is one thing, but to set up one's own mental apparatus humbly but independently and to receive from some unmeasured and unmeasurable source the personal conviction of truth, is quite another. Civilization has reached a point where the number of such spiritual pilgrims is in the millions, and is increasing as the relative numbers of followers of dying ritualism decrease.

A fair question is whether any more humane treatment of the dying is practicable. It is often dangerous to advance even a tentative method of procedure in any new sociological development. Opponents to any progress in human relationships are swift and sure in their reaction. They at once seize upon any possible weakness in any suggested practical programme and focus their emphasis upon that, thus detracting attention from any possible validity of the principles involved. Even with this to be risked, however, it seems better to suggest a tentative plan of procedure, rather than to leave the impression that none is possible.

When a person is incurably diseased he is either in his right mind or not. The fact of whether he is or is not can be established by well-known and often-used tests. If he is in his right mind, he should be able, by obtaining a medical statement of his condition, to receive legal authorization to be relieved of his suffering. If he is not in his right mind, it will either be because of drugs administered to dull pain or because of the disease itself. In the first case, he can be brought back to normalcy by the physician for the purpose of making a final decision. In the second case, his next of kin or—in the absence of such a person—the State, should be authorized to decide.

It might also be arranged that, if previous to his final illness the patient had filed, with properly designated legal, medical or health authorities, his wishes to be kept alive as long as possible, his desires would be complied with. Otherwise the decision might revert to the next of kin or to the State. Such a course is practicable.

Modern science is ripping away the sham, false authority, and religious dogma which separate man from Truth and God, as a giant hand would wipe down a curtain of black gauze which has obscured the scene on the stage. Science is also convincing man of the existence of a type of fundamental matter which does not exclude the idea of immortality. It is leading to such an increase of knowledge among the general public that before long men will know enough to learn to trust one another where trust is merited. The first of these facts will eventually do away with the doubt which has hung over the greatest of all the mysteries of life—death. The second will lead to enough mutual understanding throughout humanity to enable people to act in a merciful and fully compassionate way toward those who are dying.

When that day comes the present barbaric and superstitious methods and customs as regards unnecessarily prolonging human suffering will seem as dreadful and difficult to understand as do the human sacrifices of past civilizations and the tortures of the Middle Ages to us. The primitive nature and spiritual immaturity of the emotionalism which gave birth to, and has fostered, our present religious behavior, is daily becoming more clear. At the same time the beauty and dignity of spiritual truth consistent

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with supreme responsibility resting on each individual, the relief from which is not shared by, or purchasable from, any organization or church, are giving mankind fleeting glimpses of the reality of what Jesus lived and of what lies beyond the valley of the shadow.

When death becomes an adventure faced by an individual, not alone, but with the co-operation and loving tenderness of friends who share its pangs and who are willing themselves to suffer to bring sorely needed relief, it will lose its strongest hold on the fears of mankind. Then, and then alone, will the meaning of immortality be sufficiently vital to breathe life into our conception of Christianity. Then and then alone will Death be swallowed up in Victory.

San Francisco

By Dorothy Bennett

There never was a city like San Francisco,
Perhaps there never will be;
All day long the trade winds from the west blow,
All day long the sea

Spouts at its borders like a silver fountain,
Or great Pacific whale,
And every street runs downward from a mountain
To see the ships set sail.

Freighter, liner, and the lean destroyer
Slipping through the Gate,
Meet at dusk the seaman's Great Annoyer,
Harrier of the late,

Full-rigged Armada of the west, the fog-banks
Standing in from sea,
Covering all horizons, dark ranks
Stretching endlessly.

All night long the city is sea-stridden,
Encompassed all night long,
And the league-long, great waves from China, hidden,
Beat on it like a gong.

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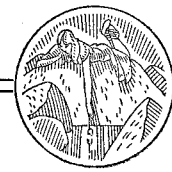

The Drag-Net of War

By CARLETON BEALS

Mars links arms with world trade. Our Secretary of War has listed twenty-six "strategic products" not found in sufficient quantities within the United States necessary to commerce and defense. Mr. Beals paints vividly the picture of the world search and its dangers.

"STROLL down Fifth Avenue and observe the luxuries demanded by women, and you will understand why wars are waged," was the gist of a recent statement by an American general, discussing commodities for which our merchants scour the earth. Perhaps unfair to blame the ladies or man's desire to please the ladies, for battle-carnage; it is equally unsound to assume, because we buy Kimberley diamonds, Bolivian tin, Liberian rubber, that sooner or later we will go to war. Yet Mars links arms with world trade; fourteen-inch guns have much to do with oil in Mesopotamia, coffee from Brazil, platinum from the Urals.

Could our nation be self-sufficient, marines wouldn't have to protect American lives and property in Nicaragua; our gunboats could back out of the Yangtse River; Mr. Stimson could recognize the wrong crowd in Brazil or Guatemala without unpleasant backfire. But our isolation is gone forever and with it much of our assurance for a peaceful future.

International commerce should minister to mankind's well-being; it should promote friendship between peoples; instead it is the Pandora box of war. Why does foreign barter involve injustice, danger, suspicion, misunderstanding, armed conflict? Why are great trading nations driven into militarism?

Of course no nation commits injustices against others, America least of all. We are the modern Sir Galahad of nations, continually rescuing the world from its blunders, ever imbued with righteousness, ever interested in uplifting our weaker sisters of this hemisphere to the holy ways of sanitation and democracy. And the individual American, though he be a gangster in Chicago, as soon as he buys passage on the *Bremen* becomes an irreproachable gentleman, who rescues distressed ladies, pays all his bills, and deserves the ample protection of the State Department in all cases. Hence our large navy is nothing more than defense against greedy imperialisms; our marines in Nicaragua and Haiti are liberating oppressed peoples.

As a matter of fact, we have far-flung interests to protect—by force if necessary. We are unable to vegetate in self-sufficient isolation. Our iron-handed factory system forces us willy-nilly to fly our flag on the five seas. If our industries are to continue, if we are to maintain present standards of material comfort, we are obliged to expand and protect our trade, in an unsettled world,

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against competition often unscrupulous. Interruption would prove fatal. Our factories demand rubber, minerals, oil. Our doctors demand quinine, iodine, nux vomica. Our stomachs demand bananas, coffee, sugar. No lady, however unshapely her legs, would sheathe them in anything but silk stockings. How harvest our crops without Yucatán binder-twine? Who would like to soil his fingers putting a new wick into the old oil-lamp for lack of tungsten for electric bulbs? A delivery-man bends under a sack of spuds: to provide that sack, a half-naked native stood waist-deep in water in the upper Bengal, stripping off corchorus bark.

Two years ago I sailed on a small tramp steamer from the placid palm-fringed cove of the Great Corn Island off Nicaragua, along the Central American coast. The vessel was so loaded down with cocoanuts that the sea swashed the decks with every roll. Cocoanuts everywhere—I ate cocoanuts, slept on cocoanuts, dreamed cocoanuts, felt like a cocoanut. Our War Department also dreams cocoanuts. My bones were made to ache by a product as essential for national defense as petroleum or steel shells. Not only do cocoanuts supply glycerine (used in explosives), but cocoanut-shell charcoal is the only practical absorbent for gas-masks. Not without reason have we secured from hard-pressed Nicaragua a ninety-nine-year lease on the Great and Little Corn Islands—ideal cocoanut kingdoms. Not without reason did the Philippines export thirty million dollars' worth of cocoanut oil in 1918 (as compared to a beggarly forty dollars' worth in 1912); to-day harvesting cocoanuts is the second largest industry on the islands.

This is but one of a series of foreign products, some of them little known, indispensable for industry and defense. Recently our Secretary of War listed twenty-six "strategic products" not found in sufficient quantities within the United States' confines, but absolutely necessary to keep our factories running and to secure us against attack. Only a few of our myriad imports, these represent the *sine qua non* essential for war-time survival: antimony, camphor, chromium, cocoanut-shell charcoal, coffee, cattle and hides, iodine, jute, manganese, manila fibre, mica, nickel, shellac, silk, sisal, sugar, tin, tungsten, wool. The drag-net is out for these paramount necessities. The trail of these raw materials leads us from pole to pole and across five continents. Every other country has similar drag-nets out, with consequent tangling of sinkers and hooks.

II

Chinese coolies are staggering under bags of stingite; Chinese and Japanese smelters stamp day and night to turn out 60 per cent of the world's antimony. Antimony helps manufacture shrapnel and bullets; type-metal for disseminating news of our victories and new German atrocities; britannia and babbitt metal, brass linings, storage-batteries. Antimony goes into telephone-cables by which our next Pershing may relay commands; into medicines for our boys stricken with tropical disease. Perhaps our Yangtse gunboats are obeying some economic law having little to do with missionaries anxious to teach heathen "yellow-bellies" that Our Lord loves peace.

To Japan and China we must turn for the better part of our silk. And in those countries and in subject Formosa, brown hands are cutting down camphor trees; slant-eyes are watching over distilleries which send out nearly seven million pounds annually of camphor—to provide us with heliotropine and other synthetic chemicals, with proxylin plastics

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and allied products, with photographic films, so that our airplanes may record enemy fortifications. To our little Jap menace we are indebted for a derivative drug essential to check the great enemy, Influenza, more dangerous than bullets and poison-gas.

The nickel trail leads us from Ontario to New Caledonia—whence 90 per cent of the world's supply; the chromium trail, from New Caledonia to Africa, Asia Minor, and Soviet Russia; the manganese trail, from Soviet Russia to Brazil and India. These metals, along with silicon, vanadium, and tungsten, provide hard high-speed steels, unexcelled for toughness, resistance to shock, penetration, and repeated stress. These metals make possible our twelve-inch armor-plate and "glass-hard" shells to pierce it, all roller-bearing surfaces, clash-gears, cam-shafts, stamp-mill shoes, dies, high-strength steel casings, gun-barrels, helical springs. Besides providing razors to shave dough-boys, they make possible "D"-steel for gun mounts, effective bayonets and sabres for our cavalry when the enemy lands on Cape Cod, also the safety-vaults to guard the bonds of our better citizens whose income taxes keep the show going.

India corners various key products. Bengal jute will serve not only for wigs to disguise our high dignitaries should Washington fall to the invader, but for Hessian, bagging, tarpaulins, sacking and other textiles, for which there is no substitute. Only in India flies the *caccus lacca* insect which pierces the indigenous lac tree giving the resinous exudation which makes possible shellac, indispensable for munitions and other war-supplies, invaluable for multiple chemical purposes. In India, in near-by Burma, Siam, and Cochin-China nod the small green-whitish tubular flowers of the *strychnos nuxvomica.* Strychnine keeps weak hearts going, prevents influenza relapse, has a hundred medicinal uses. From India and Turkey comes the opium needed to quiet flesh-torn pain; from the near-by Dutch East Indies, the quinine, without which malaria would put as many heroes out of commission as bullets.

If we are completely dependent upon Britain and Japan for certain products, they (and the rest of the world) are dependent upon our Philippines for manila hemp or *abacá,* which makes the strongest cordage known.

Eighty-five per cent of the world's tin comes from the Malay Straits, Bolivia, and the Dutch East Indies. Bolivia supplies a third of the annual supply. To Bolivia we can also turn for wolfram, which provides light-bulb tungsten and steel alloys. Both Park Avenue and the War Department must pay tribute to the indispensable Communist platinum; from Russia comes 90 per cent of the world's supply. Commercial fixation of nitrogen has not yet freed us from Chile saltpetre, and not at all from sodium iodate. Iodine is needed for photography. A powerful antiseptic, it has never been supplanted for various major medicinal uses. Its salts are essential for syphilis treatments.

Cattle and hides and wool take us to the far Argentine pampas, the Andean slopes, to the Orinoco Valley, to Australia. From Yucatán come the golden bales of sisal, a fibre slit from the henequén plant which grows best on the semi-arid limestone cap of the Mayan peninsula, and provides binder-twine for the wheat-fields of the Dakotas and the Steppes. Rubber carries us to the British and Dutch possessions of the Far East, to Central America, Brazil, the Philippines, Liberia, and the Congo. To India, Canada, China, Australia, and Guatemala we must turn to supplement our insufficient mica supply. The sugar-bowl of the world is Cuba; but Central

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America, Mexico, the Philippines, and the Far East compete.

War stretches his economic drag-net well-nigh everywhere. Our factory system has its drag-net out. Our bankers have their drag-net out. Our battleships follow the far-flung line. Our consuls tend to become pro-consuls. The army declares that to guarantee these invaluable products against any and every contretemps we must devise substitutes, lay in a two-year supply at a cost of four billion dollars, or keep the sea-lanes open. Each of the great Powers has its own "strategic list," varying according to native resources. France, it is reported, has laid in a five-years' supply of manganese and other metals. Just as other countries control products we consider essential, so the Philippines, our closed-door Caribbean, the United States proper, are the source of materials which foreign Powers cannot obtain in adequate quantities elsewhere. The rival drag-nets grow ever more tangled.

III

Monopolistic governmental control of key products sets snags for these rival drag-nets, complicates the economic map. Our own tariff favors Philippine cocoanuts to the disadvantage of those from Ceylon. More direct official monopolies are set up. Sisal was long thoroughly monopolized by the governmental Comisión Reguladora de Henequén of Yucatán. During the World War, we were held up for extortionate prices. Yucatán wages rose rapidly; the henequén growers made larger profits; but the bulk of this rapacious gain went to advance the personal fortunes of government officials. The American public, Mexicans, Russians, Argentinians paid the high price of this regulation and graft. Since then, Great Britain has experimented with henequén culture in Africa; the plant can be grown in lower Florida; fields have been set out in Honduras and the Philippines. To-day the Yucatán henequén industry is in ruins. The monopoly has been broken. Half the world's supply now comes from other regions.

Enter Raj Rubber, divested of British robes. When in 1493, on the Haitian beach, Columbus watched red men playing with a rubber ball which bounced much better than the "wind balls of Castile," he little realized this new product would provide more fabulous wealth than all the gold of the Indies. Up until a few years ago, England controlled over 70 per cent of the world's rubber supply and had a strategic leverage on even more: 93 per cent coming from Malay, Ceylon, Sumatra, Java and Borneo. In 1922 England adopted the Stevenson Act to regulate production and export according to market prices. The minimum 32 cents per pound soon rose to $1.20. As the United States consumes from 70 to 80 per cent of the world's supply, we were paying the piper.

President Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, with a publicity blast, denounced perfidious Albion's high-binder tactics. A New York rubber exchange was created. A new American rubber pool with forty million dollars' capital commenced accumulating a reserve. Active efforts were made to reclaim used rubber—two hundred and forty-six thousand pounds in 1927. A concerted search for synthetic rubber was instituted, Edison leading the experiments. New extractions were made from the desert guayule. In California thousands of acres were set out to this shrub. New potential rubber regions were explored in the Philippines and Latin America. Large American companies went into the plantation business: Firestone obtained one million acres in Liberia and large tracts in Mexico and South Ameri-

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ca; Mr. Ford, with grandiose gesture, started the world's largest rubber farm —a five-million-acre concession in Brazil; the United States Rubber Company and the Goodyear people extended their East Indian holdings. The Automobile Chamber of Commerce founded a ten-million-dollar corporation to produce, purchase, and deal in raw rubber.

Great Britain hastened to repeal the Stevenson Act. But the monopoly was already broken. To-day England controls less than 50 per cent of the world's output.

Other governments might take a leaf out of these funereal Mexican and British experiences. But thus far attempts to obtain jute outside of Bengal have failed. The Japanese Government keeps tight hold on her camphor and silk production and exports. Chile stiffens her grip on nitrates and iodine. Germany and France monopolize potash. Government control is exercised over the export of Egyptian long-staple cotton. Brazil officialdom tries to regulate world coffee prices. According to a fairly recent Congressional report, some seventy products, figuring importantly in world trade, are subject to such government monopoly.

These monopoly snags rip holes in the drag-nets as each nation fights to corner scarce materials and conflicting capital interests reach out to dominate world industry and trade. That vital materials of industry and defense can be monopolized within national boundaries indicates but part of the existing anarchy in world production and distribution. Formerly the nations went out and grabbed the necessary colonies and cruelly exploited foreign labor in backward countries to benefit the homeland. The iron ring of older empires still clamps tight on the world's commercial highways. New iron rings are being established. To-day our capital goes out to grab undeveloped resources in much the same spirit.

In the late sixties the Bolivian dictator, Malgarejo, tied the British minister to an ass, face tailward, and rode him three times around the La Paz plaza. The Queen of England, on discovering that the country was quite out of reach of the guns of her Majesty's navy, seized a pen and crossed the country off the map, saying: "Bolivia no longer exists." But the day may come when Bolivia is more important to mankind than England.

For Bolivia is a newly opened reservoir of tin, antimony, tungsten, petroleum, and other essential products. The race for tin has seen American capital there increase from almost nothing before the World War to nearly one hundred and twenty million dollars.

Bolivia is typical of the modern capital penetration process. The frantic exploitation of Bolivia's resources has proved of no great benefit to the Bolivian people. Old feudal serfdom (lacking the ameliorative features of agrarian peonage) has been perpetuated in the mines, smelters, and factories. It is aggravated by race domination. Starvation wages and hardships cause periodic revolts, such as have been symptomatic of foreign capital activities in colonial areas.

The substitute for decent living standards is autocratic government. In Bolivia the price of cheap tin has been a continuation of the Latin-American evil of dictatorship, which means rapacious military rule, ignoring public education, social welfare, and self-government. Thus, in Bolivia, to carry on this type of rapid raw-product exploitation, we were forced to buttress up the Siles tyranny through improper loans bearing high interest rates, heavily discounted, and fundamentally unsound. The money, drawn out of the pockets of gullible American bond-buyers, went primarily

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for graft and military purposes. Ninety per cent of the national Bolivian income was "tagged" for repayment; and nearly 60 per cent, up until the recent revolution, was actually so used. Thus the Bolivian Government, enslaving the people, itself becomes enslaved to foreign loans and foreign capital. Agricultural developments, diversified industry, education—things that would help stabilize and free the national economy—were disregarded. Tin is more important to us than Bolivia. The aftermath of such a ring-around-the-rosy process is revolution, the jealousy of other countries, chaos in world production. Here are sown the seeds of possible armed intervention and future wars.

IV

Of course, the War Department's drag-net is thrown out for materials necessary for the salvation of this country. The problem for the department is a practical and technical one—how and where to obtain the necessary materials with the greatest ease and minimum cost. That the search for these materials under present conditions helps create the very situations which may sooner call for their use for military purposes is no concern of our industrious officials. Our army and navy leaders, engaged in a specific task, do not look upon the seizing of these products as an extensive economic and political problem, nor do they indulge in philosophizing upon the new character of our industrial and institutional life revealed by such diverse needs, nor upon those complicated relationships between the individual and society which threaten our future peace and happiness.

Indeed, few of us acknowledge the consequences of this far-flung activity. There is little evidence of any great desire to seek fundamental and rational solutions. Senator Borah would have us hide our heads in the traditional sands of isolation. The War Department would have us go boldly forth for what we need. Neither attitude is realistic or enlightened. Neither by hiding out nor by aggression can the drag-nets be unsnarled. Nor can we continue to promote aggressive commercial, financial, and industrial policies while ducking behind a high-tariff wall, and hope to obtain peace by treaties and fine words.

Mr. Kellogg's Paris pact is merely a futile beating of a rubber cushion to make it change its shape. It is a "rationalization" of Senator Borah's franker isolationist stand, a verbal subterfuge by which we evade the responsibilities of peace enforcement and secretly place our faith in the iron shard—Christian Science peace blissfully ignoring the smallpox germs of war. Such treaties are made in an economic vacuum with just as little comprehension of real forces as Mr. Kellogg's efforts to impose democracy on the Nicaraguans by marines. Until the world's chaotic productive energies are harnessed to mankind's welfare, the world will face political chaos payable in battleships, and the economic causes of war will persist to rupture every "scrap of paper" however many gold seals and flourishing signatures it may bear—this is the hypocritical theology rather than the active religion of peace. So long as the economic drag-nets run foul of each other disarmament conferences are likely to continue to promote greater armaments.

The world must shelve some cherished nationalistic dogmas. Because a nation possesses within its geographic domain products essential for the development and safety of other nations it should have no right to monopolize them to the disadvantage of other peoples. This feature of national sovereignty should be junked. Certainly the strong nations have never recognized

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this dog-in-the-manger right in weaker nations. We forced the open door on Japan and China (though inconsistently we have set up our own closed door in Latin America). The great nations have staked out their claims in colonial areas, or they have established zones of influence, or they have resorted to other devices to make backward regions yield up their undeveloped wealth. The stronger nations should also make their own vital necessities readily accessible to all nations.

The world struggle to-day is less for political domination than for economic supremacy. The modern state has not kept pace with the invisible industrial superstate. The new world empires of communications and business are almost completely divorced from social control. Nations and peoples have become the catspaws of vast new-trade empires whose entire diplomacy is secret and whose purposes, largely based upon private profit, do not rationally further mankind's needs. Not only products but human beings and whole peoples are caught squirming in the drag-net. Cattle-rustlers like international boundaries because they can more easily escape castigation. The new realms of international business, since they operate outside of any unified governmental control, can largely avoid public scrutiny into their operations, can carry on without any effective restraint beyond that dictated by the ambitions of audacious entrepreneurs. The whole purpose of production and distribution—which should make living easier for mankind—is entirely lost sight of in this anarchic competition.

A beginning toward the proper control over the world's resources might be made with the rationalization of the production and distribution of a few key products, a rationalization not in the narrow technical efficiency sense but embracing all of the needs of those connected with the industry, the needs of the various nations, and the public at large. The most "strategic products" should be removed from the war drag-net. By bringing a limited number of industries, those providing materials most essential for national defense, under more socialized control, we should be removing constant friction and fear and would be doing more for world peace than a baker's dozen disarmament conferences.

The recent international sugar conference in Brussels shows that under the stress of economic disaster even private initiative will attempt to organize an industry on a world basis; but as the end pursued has no direct relation with human welfare but with the safeguarding of prices and investments for corporate profit, such efforts not only largely ignore the problem of distribution in relation to production, but founder on the rocks of national and individual self-interest. The European steel cartel, its organization and break-up, is another example of such effort and failure. Such agreements usually represent little more than temporary truces in a continuous industrial war—until the day that one set of financial interests secures an imperialistic world-monopoly against which other nations must struggle.

Not merely private entrepreneurs but public representatives, not merely capital but labor, should bear the brunt of negotiations; and not merely one product but a number of products should be simultaneously brought under control, so that each nation would gain while making concessions. Such negotiations would have to include Russia.

Soviet Russia, of course, sneers at the non-Communist or so-called "capitalist" world, saying it is too disunited, too disorganized, too degenerated owing to nationalistic and economic jealousies

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even to unite against Russia, let alone bringing order into the chaos of world production. What is needed, of course, is a modified five-year plan for the world, not for the speeding up of production but to bring it under proper control. If only a few "strategic" drag-net industries were socially rationalized throughout the world a great step would have been made.

These selected industries, through concerted mutual governmental pressure, should be obliged to agree upon decent standards of wages and work; the governments should accept appropriate uniform taxation, uniform export and tariff regulations. An estimate of industrial and defense needs for given materials over a period of years could be made, each nation guaranteeing to purchase (subject to revision with due notice) a given amount, thus providing a working basis to determine the proper output in various producing regions, and necessary new development activities. Costs of production and prices would thus be relatively stabilized and co-ordinated. In some such way a few of the most rampant economic forces now dividing the nations must be forced into the strait-jacket of man's collective intelligence.

Some such equitable reorganization would wipe out arguments that international competition prevents proper wage levels and working conditions; it would lessen social unrest in backward countries, mitigate the deplorable rigors of colonial exploitation and lessen the need to buttress up odious dictatorships by semi-political loans, favors, and gunboats. It would foment the social evolution of retarded peoples along more orderly lines, would prevent the periodic glutting of the world's markets, and would remove the present sharp edge of lawless competition for certain scarce war-products, now the bone of bitter contention and ever conducive to war.

Perhaps it is a waste of time to urge such a programme on a country so imbued with theories of "rugged individualism" as is the United States, however much within our own borders that philosophy and practice of business are being subtly altered. Yet in domestic affairs, whatever our theories and habits of production and distribution, industrial activities are restrained by law and regulation and fairly uniform social customs. No New Yorker, dipping his spoon into a grapefruit grown near Hollywood, expects to read the startling head-lines that Jimmy Walker has declared war on Governor Young. We do not fear war as an outgrowth of domestic interchange. But no such psychology and no such comparable restraints exist in connection with world trade. In international affairs the practice of "rugged individualism" in industry is the practice of anarchy, for the international business empire is beyond nearly all public control, has no real law but itself, and can have only one outcome—repeated armed conflict.

The goal of socially rationalizing products likely to cause war is not half so utopian or illusory as the Kellogg pact, though it may require much more effort and honesty to reach it. Unless certain war-provoking commodities are made the agents of man, instead of men becoming the puppets of such international super-industries, then we—along with other nations—will flounder helplessly in the drag-net of militarism. If our War Department can plan for future war-time defense along economic lines, surely we can afford also to plan for the control of dangerous economic forces which will otherwise make war inevitable. The only alternative to such economic foresight is a brutal career of political and financial imperialism, a blind race for meaningless supremacy.

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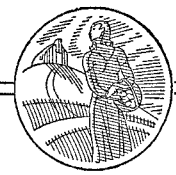

The Carolina Wilderness

By E. C. L. ADAMS

The poor whites of South Carolina depicted in a group of pointed dialogues by the author of "Congaree Sketches" and "Nigger to Nigger"

THE people of these sketches are mostly of English origin. They are the so-called crackers, the name cracker coming from the use of long whips which they were constantly cracking when they visited the towns with their wagons and carts.

Settling in the Sand Hill belt with a soil unfertile, life for generations has been difficult. They are mostly poor, undernourished, undeveloped, and illiterate. Many undoubtedly have strains of Indian and Negro blood, and many are of as pure English blood as can be found in America. Mostly cruel, with a resentment toward society, they hate alike the more successful white man and the more unfortunate Negro, whom they intend to keep in his place. However, there are exceptions, as there have come from these people some worth-while men who have made their way against all odds, and even among the most untutored, one will find here and there a chieftain of strength and ability.

PUTTIN' ON AIRS

Boze: These town folks sho puts on lots er airs; thinks deyself too good to eat like other folks.

Pede: What you got in you' mind?

Boze: I been over here to a barbecue one of 'em give. Had a whole lot er city people walkin' round dress up thinkin' they better than anybody else. They had ole man Bumby cookin' for 'em. He's the best barbecue cook in dese sandhills. Dey sont for him an' look to me like it was as fine a 'cue as I ever seen, but them people was walkin' all round there lookin' at it an' dey ask ole man Bumby all kind er questions bout how he cook it an' dis, dat, and de other. It made me mad listenin' to 'em cause I help ole man Bumby wid it.

Pede: I ain' see why you get mad cause dey come down an' talk to ole man Bumby. Don't look to me like it was no harm for 'em to ask him a few questions.

Hate: Well, you never know what them damn people' object is.

Boze: Look like they jes want to find out all ole man Bumby know den they go back an' teach it to a nigger. Next thing you know they'll be sendin' for de nigger an' ole man Bumby won't be needed for de next 'cue.

Pede: Don't you reckon some of these niggers kin cook a 'cue good as ole man Bumby without havin' to larn from him?

Boze: Ef they can, a white man ought'n to own it.

Pede: Boze, it look like you an' Hate so spiteful till you mighty nigh ain't got no use for your own self.

Boze: Now, you better hush. You bout to start wid some more er them fool ideas of yourn. Ef you keep on wid

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dat kind er talk, everybody in this precinct will be s'picious of you. Look to me like you gettin' to think you better than your equals.

Pede: I does de best I can.

Hate: You makes a mighty poor out.

Boze: De way you talks makes me grieve for your poor ole dead father.

Pede: What else happen to de barbecue?

Boze: Ain't nothin' partic'lar happen except what I was talkin' bout—the airs some of these stucked-up city people has. One on 'em axe ole man Bumby ain't he meat gitten cold. Ole man Bumby tell him he put it on last night an' de fire went out at eight o'clock in de mornin' an' dey have rain an' ain't have no more wood, an' den it don't do no good to heat meat after it git cold.

Pede: It look like ole man Bumby ain't do full justice if de meat was cold an' ain't full done.

Boze: It was good enough for de people out here, an' I ain't see where city folks is any better. I tell you de kind er thing happen. I heard one er them people say:

"There's a swarm er flies over that meat, and it's cold as ice."

An' he say:

"Ain't you kin offer a suggestion?"

An' the man he was talkin' to went up to ole man Bumby an' talk round him a little bit an' asked him some question bout de fire an' he say:

"There seems to be a few flies lighting on this meat."

An' ole man Bumby look at him an' say:

"Dere is a few flies on it, but they ain't nothin' but house flies."

Dis man look at him an' say: "Yes, dat's a fact," an' smile an' walk off.

An' I tell ole man Bumby I ain't kin see what diff'ence a few flies make.

Pede: What ole man Bumby say?

Boze: He say peoples always walkin' round tryin' to find sump'n to talk about.

Hate: Puttin' on airs.

Boze: Puttin' on airs.

Pede: Puttin' on airs?

TEN YEARS FOR NOTHING

Boze: It was sho a shame de sentence dey pass on Luke.

Hate: We was talkin' bout dat to-day, sendin' a white man up for ten long years for killin' a nigger.

Boze: Dere wasn't no use for 'em to put Luke in de penitentiary. It's jes what I say bout gittin' de right kind er lawyer. Ef dey had er picked a good lawyer, Luke would er been walkin' round here free as I is.

Pede: Well, it look to me onreasonable de way Luke ack. Seems to me like his wife had much right in de penitentiary as he had.

Boze: You better keep them thoughts to yourself. It's a good thing you an' me is kin.

Pede: Well, dey tell me de way it happen Luke went off an' spend de night wid another woman, an' when he come home he wife tell him dat dis nigger axed her er unfair question, an' Luke had him arrested an' he was out on bail when Luke seen him ridin' long peaceful in de buggy an' shot him to death.

Hate: Dat's de truth, but what difference does it make? It was a nigger, an it's jes one nigger less, and then it's all wrong puttin' a white man in prison jes for killin' a nigger. I jes can't see nothin' right about it. I can't see how a jury er white men got de heart to set dere an' put one er they own color in the penitentiary for killin' a damn nigger.

Pede: Well, Hate, you an' Boze an' all of you know that this nigger was a white man's nigger an' was never known to harm a thing in he life. He was kind an' full er friendship for everybody, an' he went to Luke's house to buy some liquor. You know it was a regular place

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for both white people an' niggers to buy liquor, an' that poor nigger jes stood around and talked to them other niggers and to Luke's wife, and after a little while went on his way home peaceably without ever a thought that anybody had anything against him; an' Luke's wife was mad at him an' jealous bout Luke goin' off after another woman, an' told Luke what dis nigger say to her jes because she want to make him stay home, an' she knowed she was tellin' a lie when she told it. She let dis poor nigger go to his death jes because she wanted to punish Luke.

Boze: I know all dat's true, but what I don't understand is what de court want to punish Luke so severely for. It don't seem reasonable.

Pede: Luke knowed dat nigger ain' done nothin' an' jes killed him cause he thought it wouldn't be nothin' to kill a nigger. It look like Luke's wife would fret bout havin' that man's blood on her hands.

Boze: I don't see nothin' to fret about, except de mistake made in de handlin' er Luke's case. Pede, you got de wrong kind er mind, an' it's mens with your mind dat creates a lot of trouble in dis world, an' if you don't change your ways er thinkin', your mind is goin' to burst out too far in de wrong way, an' before you know it de buzzards will be pickin' your bones.

Hate: I been watchin' Pede. Course he's young, but he got a mind dat will betray some of us yet, unless he makes a change.

Pede: Well, I know a nigger is a nigger an' I know he is not equal to white people, an' I believe in keepin' them in their place, but I do think that it's wrong to go out an' butcher a man dat ain't done no harm jes because he's a nigger.

Boze: Your poor old daddy would mighty near turn over in he grave if he heard you talk dat way. Pede, git all them kind er notions out er your head, an' jes bear in mind that we got to look out for ourselves; dat we got de nigger race against us, an' we 'gainst them.

Pede: But you don't stop wid niggers. Dere is a lot er white men you 'gainst, too.

Boze: Yes, I ain't got no use for dat class er white men dat's always tryin' to hold dey selves up better than anybody else. I'm jes as good as dey is, an' I wouldn't never miss a chance to harm one of 'em.

Pede: Some of 'em must have some good in 'em.

Hate: No matter what dey got, I hates 'em.

Pede: As bad as you hates 'em you don't slaughter 'em as bad as you do niggers.

Boze: We jes got to be a little more careful, but we sticks it to 'em when we gits a chance. But goin' back to niggers, I'd burn every nigger in de world wid a smile an' give 'em a little more fire every time dey hollered. Pede, you better mend your ways.

Hate: Think it over, Pede. Better try to improve your mind.

Boze: Well, I done tarried too long already. See you all at preachin' to-morrow. So long.

A CHAIN-GANG PARTY

Boze: How's everything, Huck?

Huck: Mighty fine.

Boze: How many niggers you got on your gang?

Huck: Court jes ended an' we got a slew of 'em. Got a few white ones, too.

Boze: De white ones ain't much use to you, is dey?

Huck: If dey come from round here, dey ain't no use at all; but if they comes from off, we works on 'em de same as niggers.

Pede: Why does you make a diff'ence?

Huck: Well, most of 'em serves they

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time or is pardoned, an' I has to live here where most of 'em has plenty of kin an' don't never forget; but we has a frolic when dey come from off.

Boze: Dey ain't much service when you first git 'em, is dey?

Huck: Well, dey has to be broken in, but a whip lash is a language dat all of 'em understands. Most of 'em comes out of de jail fails at first, an' we promises them amusement when we gets back to camp. You know it's 'gainst de law to beat prisoners, so we hangs dat over dey head in de day time an' keeps our promise at night when dere ain't no witnesses.

Boze: You all got any good singin' niggers over dere?

Huck: Some of de finest you ever heared. You an' Pede an' Hate come over Sunday an' we'll have a supper.

Boze: We'll be there. I loves to come over to de camp for supper. Ain't nothin' like havin' them niggers sing an' wait on you, particularly after you had 'em long enough to know their place an' how to honor a white man.

Huck: By God! All dat works under me honors white men. If dey don't, dey never leaves dere to dishonor one.

Hate: Ain't you got too many new prisoners to be botherin' wid us Sunday?

Huck: No, you all come on. Sunday guh be a big whippin' day.

Pede: What you guh whip 'em for?

Huck: Guh broke 'em in. Guh cut their hindparts off 'em wid a strap so dey won't have no desire to set down.

Boze: Dat's right. Fix 'em so dey can't set down. They'll work better.

Huck: Leave it to me. I ain't never seen one yet I can't broke in. You kin hear dat brokin'-in chune ring all over de woods. I knows how to handle niggers, an' my particular pet is one er dese educated niggers. Believe me, brother, I kin mighty nigh make him forgit how to read an' write.

Boze: We'll be there. I mighty near rather see that nigger whippin' than to eat de supper.

Huck: Well, keep your mouth shut an' I'll show you some fun to-morrow evenin'.

Boze: Look for us. We'll be over right after church.

A NIGGER

Boze: We been settin' round here talkin' bout niggers.

Hate: What was you sayin'?

Boze: I was jes tellin' these boys bout de trial of this here little nigger Jenkins.

Hate: You was on the jury, wasn't you?

Boze: Yas, I were on the jury. Jes got off it about a hour ago.

Hate: What did you give him? Life or de chair?

Boze: The chair. There was one of de jurors helt out for awhile, said he didn't see no call to convict dis nigger. Had some kind er talk bout he was a mere child, an' he ain't sho he was guilty; but I helt out for the chair an' we over-rid the voice of complaint an' he got de chair.

Pede: Dey tell me dat nigger ain't done nothin'. Dat little gal jerk he slingshot out he hand an' he had a scuffle wid her tryin' to git it back. Dat made her ma and pa mad an' dey started a hue and cry bout he throwed her down an' tried to assault her. Now, dey tell me dat's de truth. No, it don't look to me like he was guilty of nothin'. I think if dey had a stripped him an' made his pa give him a good lashin' wid a wagon whip dat would have been enough.

Boze: Well, I set on the jury an' we brought in a verdict of guilty, an' looks to me like you puttin' niggers before white folks.

Hate: Dat's what I say. A man who puts a nigger before white people ought to be lynched.

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Pede: Yes, but if he ain't committed no crime it don't look like he ought to have his life took. The jury was meant to give justice.

Hate: Justice ain't got nothin' to do with it, not the way you means it. This country is over-run with niggers an' we got to pertect ourselves, our families, and our children.

Pede: But how, when this little nigger ain't commit no serious crime?

Boze: Well, he's a damn nigger an' I set on de jury an' we give him the chair an' I'm proud of it. I ain't never puttin' a nigger before a white man.

Hate: You an' me have minds alike. It's my rule to teach a nigger his place.

Boze: If they don't want 'em convicted they better not let me set on the jury, cause I promised God that every chance I get I'll uphold the white race an' turn the juice on every damn nigger I ever gets a chance at.

Hate: Pede, you one of us people. I can't bear the thought of you low'ing yourself this way. It don't sound right. You know there ain't nothin' lower in this created world than a dirty nigger. They jes live here an' take the bread out of your mouth an' mine, an' it don't take nothin' for them to get beside themselves.

Pede: Dat's so, too. I reckon you has got to teach 'em they place.

Boze: I ain't blamin' Pede so much for de way he talk. He's young. There's a good many white people round here that gets to be mighty nigh grown fore dey finds out they is better than a nigger.

Hate: That's the God's truth. It's a shame how careless some people is the way they neg-lect teachin' their children. Children are growin' up everywhere that don't know nothin'. Some of 'em, after they get grown, ain't got sense enough to sell they vote, an' most of 'em ain't got sense enough to charge what it's worth.

Boze: It's Sadday. I reckon I got to go home an' have de old woman fix me a tub of hot water, so I kin wash my skin. You know to-morrow is Sunday an' we're goin' to have a big crowd turn out for the church.

Hate: I hear the new preacher knows the gospel by heart. I reckon I'll have to be goin', too, because I promised the deacon that I'd be there in time to sing in the choir.

Pede: Well, I'll see you all at the meetin'.

Boze: They set the thirtieth for that nigger's execution. So long.

THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' TO KILLIN'

Boze: Talkin' bout killin' people, there ain't nothin' to it. I don't see what a man worry his self bout a trial for. If I has enough gainst a man, I'd set on de roadside at night an' pick him off jes like I would a bird. There ain't nothin' to it. If they ketch you an' you use your head a little bit an' know what lawyer to git, you'll come clear.

Pede: It seems to me you'd have to fret some about the trial.

Hate: Well, there oughtn to be nothin' to it. If a man do you dirt, there ain't no use to wait for de courts, cause they ain't goin' to do nothin'. The best way is to trust in God an' your gun.

Pede: Well, how does a lawyer work it in the courts?

Boze: Well, there's several little things that must not be neglected. Sometime you has to have more than one lawyer, an' you got to know how to pick 'em. Then you must have a little money, an' you can almost mighty nigh git enough by rakin' an' scrapin' to clear your conscience an' satisfy the lawyer; then you know your vote counts an' your influence at votin' time.

Hate: You're right bout what you said, but there's more to it.

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Boze: I ain't finished yet tellin' you how to work it. First thing, you got to pick a lawyer that stands in with the Governor and the judges. You got to pick one that ain't afraid to have the judge round to his house for dinner and supper an' ain't scared to give him all the liquor he can drink. That's one thing you got to remember. Then you got to have a lawyer that is sharp enough to know what judge to invite to a meal, an' there's plenty of them, an' after you do that, it's well to look over the whole business an' see if you can't find a lawyer that's a member of the Legislature to jine your first lawyer. That's very important. You know Legislature makes judges, an' you can always get a case put off. If the legislator has duties to perform, the judge is only too glad to accommodate him. Another thing, it is always a good thing to have a lawyer who ain't got too good er health. The right kind of judge will always put your case off. In fact, if you use good judgment, you could git your case put off, an' put off, until all the witnesses is either dead or forgot, an' if they ain't dead they memories has become feeble with old age. There ain't nothin' to a trial. The main thing is knowin' how to pick your lawyer.

Pede: How bout the jury?

Hate: Most times the jury ain't goin' to be gainst you, an' if they is, they is ways of fixin' that, too. That is, if you got a first-class lawyer.

Pede: How can you fix that when you got enemies on the jury?

Boze: You can mighty nigh always find one friend on the jury, but even without one friend there is a way of fixin' it. The main thing, however, is to pick the right lawyer an' be friends with the courthouse rats.

Pede: What is a courthouse rat?

Boze: Ain't no use for me to go into details bout that, but all I tell you is pick the right lawyer an' stand in with the courthouse rats.

Pede: Well, I ain't exactly understand what a courthouse rat is.

Boze: Well, I'll go this far with you. A courthouse rat hates niggers an' he don't wear no stiff collar, except—but I better keep my mouth shut on that.

Pede: To go back where we left off, you was tellin' us that the main thing was to pick the right lawyer, but you never did explain what you'd do when you had enemies on the jury.

Boze: In a case like that, if you got the right kind of judge with the right kind of lawyer, you can sometimes in very bad cases git the judge to bring a directed verdict of not guilty. There ain't nothin' else for the jury to do but come in an' say: "Not guilty."

Pede: I have heard of that bein' done, an' I heard some lawyers discussin' it an' they said it was unconstitutional; that the judge had no right to come in an' take on himself the freein' of a prisoner that the jury was liable to convict.

Boze: Them ain't no lawyers, an' ain't nobody give a damn bout the Constitution. I'm jes tellin' you how to git loose when you killed a white man, an' the way as I tell you is the way to do it, an' it has been done. You know a judge ain't nothin' but a man, an' most men are lookin' out for they own advantage. There ain't nothin' to the law, an' all this rippin' an' rearin' in the courthouse, this whoopin' an' hollerin', ain't nothin' but a lot of bluff. They got to do that to satisfy a few people who believes in the Ten Commandments, or wants to make an impression that they does.

Pede: Well, I'm larnin' every day.

Hate: Son, you jes listen to you' elders an' you'll grow in wisdom. There ain't nothin' wrong wid you. You jes need a little experience.

Boze: No, there ain't nothin' to no trial ef you know how to work it.

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The 1932 Presidential Sweepstakes

By FRANK R. KENT

Raskob, Roosevelt, and rebellion. Why the emotional fireworks in the late Congress—principles or politics? Has Al Smith secret hopes of the Democratic nomination for President? A keen political analysis in which Mr. Kent names the four men, one of whom will probably be next President of the United States.

In the session of Congress that ended in March there was an enormous turmoil over drought relief, the soldiers' bonus, Muscle Shoals, and the "dole." Charges and countercharges that politics was being played with "human misery" and that the afflicted farmer was being neglected and exploited were heatedly interchanged. Assaults were made on the Power Trust and Prohibition, the Stock Exchange and the International Bankers, the Wickersham report and what one Progressive senator delicately described as "the garbage pails of Wall Street." A wide range of subjects was colorfully covered in debate and it will be recalled that there was an extraordinary display of emotional fireworks. Gentlemen in both branches seemed deeply stirred. They worked themselves up to a high pitch of excitement. There was much beating of the breast and violent talk of principles and convictions. Altogether it was quite a show and beyond doubt impressed a good many people as being spontaneous, real, and what it seemed on the surface.

Actually, the commotion over all these things was largely pumped up and fictitious. In the main they formed a screen behind which the so-called leaders of both parties and all factions were politically manœuvring for position in the next Presidential campaign. During the recess this summer and fall the manœuvring will be continued largely through the publicity departments of the two party committees. There will also be the White House press conferences, which can—and will—be used by the President for propaganda purposes, and of course certain Progressive senators, whose appetites for personal publicity are exceptionally keen and whose success in getting it amounts to a talent, will as usual loiter in Washington for the purpose of seeing that the hungry correspondents get their regular doses of anti-administration dope. In December when the Seventy-second Congress convenes, the manœuvring will take on renewed intensity and earnestness. It will continue with progressive force until after the Presidential election. The extraordinary and unprecedented closeness of the party divisions in House as well as Senate will render the manœuvres of the next Congress futile and foolish but will not lessen their number or decrease their energy. On the contrary the chaos and confusion sure to exist in

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a Congress where neither party has a functioning majority in either branch promote politics as nothing else could do. In this case, however, the next session would be largely political if conditions in it were wholly normal and natural. Presidential campaigns are not like mayoralty campaigns. They start two years ahead of time—not a few months—and it is none too soon. This business of nominating a candidate for the Presidency is a ponderous one. It involves vast planning, manœuvring, manipulation, and organization.

The truth is, 1932 is on the wing, and Presidential politics, as always at this stage of the game, is the mainspring of every move of every man with a stake in it. It is in the minds of them all from the President at one end of Pennsylvania Avenue to the most obscure member of the House at the other.

On the Republican side speculative interest is relatively chilled by the inevitability of the Hoover nomination. Barring an act of God or an unprecedented refusal to run, he will be named. Neither the wild bellows of rage from the Progressive Republicans, the violent distaste of the wet Republicans, nor the lukewarm lip loyalty of the regular Republicans will sidetrack him. It is as axiomatic that a sitting President can renominate himself as it is that he wants to be renominated. And despite any amount of bad luck, and notwithstanding the burdens and harassments of the job, never was there one who did not. There is concern among Republican managers as to who will get second place on their ticket and what the platform will be, but not as to their Presidential candidate. There is no uncertainty about that. They know it will be Hoover. Exceedingly low in their minds over conditions, they fervently pray among themselves for that combination of circumstances that so often has saved their party when it seemed doomed to defeat—to wit, a return of business prosperity and a recurrence of the almost chronic Democratic stupidity.

The real interest is naturally in the Democratic situation—and for two reasons. First, because not since 1916 have the Democratic prospects for success seemed so bright. This is due not only to the economic distress, which always operates in favor of the minority party and against the administration, or to the diminished prestige and popularity of Mr. Hoover. There is a deeper reason. The political psychology of the people makes them restless for a change after a prolonged period of one-party power. This is as true in other countries as it is here. Even under normal conditions they would be ripe for the switch in 1932 after twelve years of uninterrupted Republican control. It may not happen but it is due.

The other reason for interest in the Democratic situation is that there seems developing a fight not only for the nomination but over the platform that promises a rip-snorting convention in which the cleavage in the party will be clean cut and acute and the feeling between the factions bitter and intense. For example, although a large section of the party is dry, it is conceded the Democratic candidate will be wet. He may not be for repeal but he will be at least for revision of the Eighteenth Amendment. The logic of the wet nomination is so clear that hardly any one disputes it. In the first place, the wet sentiment in the great pivotal States east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio River, indispensable to Democratic success, is such that carrying them with a dry candidate is out of the question. In the second place, all of the really available Presidential material in the party is wet. There is not a man in sight with a ghost of a chance to be nomi-

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nated who is not emphatically wet—Roosevelt, Young, Ritchie, Smith, Cox, Baker, Bulkley. You can go over the field and include all the dark horses and long shots—they are all wet. In the third place, as the Republicans are already definitely headed dry, the ordinary political logic and common sense compel the Democrats to take the other side of the one public issue concerning which the American people are really deeply stirred. Privately, the dry Southern Democratic leaders concede this. They are not at heart opposed to the wet candidate, are prepared to be "overcome" as to that. What they are determinedly against is a wet platform. They draw the distinction quite clearly, make no bones about it. The reason they were so enraged with Mr. John J. Raskob, chairman of the National Committee, is that what he wants to do is make the party wringing wet all the way through—committee, convention, platform, candidates. The bitterness of their anti-Raskob feeling is hard to exaggerate. As they see it, Raskob is really a Republican, who became Democratic in 1928 because of the Smith nomination and holds his party position solely because he was Smith's personal friend. The conviction is strong that Mr. Raskob is a wet before he is either Republican or Democrat. To the Southern drys, who do not like him anyhow, and resent the idea of the Democratic party being so heavily in debt and so financially dependent upon this General Motors multimillionaire, the Committee meeting last March, when Raskob submitted his Prohibition proposal, appeared a cold-blooded effort of the First Mortgage Holder to foreclose his mortgage. How they fumed about that! How furious they were—and still are—at the Raskob effort to force his wet plank on them. Above all others that is the one thing that would embarrass them most. That, they say, wholly disregards "local conditions." It would compel them either to repudiate the platform or risk their political lives. It's all right about the candidate; he can be wet—but the platform has got to be face-saving for the South, else it can't go along.

That is the argument. That is what they fought for in the Committee last March and that will be the main fight in the convention next year. Their idea is simple enough. It is conceded that unless the party carries the great pivotal States of the wet East, principally the New York group, it cannot win. It is true the dry South and Southwest are equally essential to a Democratic electoral majority. The proposition is to divide—give the wet East the candidate and the dry South the platform. With that arrangement, it is urged, the two wings of the party can unite behind the ticket and march together.

One of the best-known Democratic leaders of the South put it this way: "We know perfectly well we have to carry New York and New Jersey to win and that a dry candidate would greatly diminish, if not destroy, our chances. We want to elect a Democratic President and the South will not stand solidly against the nomination of a wet, provided he is not an intemperate and extreme wet who stands for nothing else. On the other hand, if the platform is for repeal, then we are up against it hard in the South, and any one who thinks there would not be a dangerous revolt does not know conditions. If, however, the platform is for law enforcement and without definite anti-Prohibition declaration, we can get by with the wet candidate all right. Our local candidates in dry districts can say every Democrat is entitled to his opinion; that, while the Presidential nominee is for repeal or revision, the party has taken no such stand, and if elected to Senate or House they

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will vote to uphold the Eighteenth Amendment. The other way—the Raskob way—means that these candidates in dry States would be classed as wets and ruined. If you don't believe that, you don't know the South."

To the wets this seems a pussyfooting course that will stamp the party as without courage to face the issue and with no real conviction on the subject. The answer of the drys is that this is not a question of principle—it's a question of practical politics; that exactly that was done in 1928 and did not lose the candidate a single vote; that if it had not been done more Southern Democrats would have bolted and more Southern Congressmen lost their seats. Further, it is said, the Presidential candidate makes his own platform in his speech of acceptance; that the party platform ought to be one upon which all factions can stand; that they are not asking for a dry declaration, but an innocuous law-enforcement plank that will not be a wet declaration. "What," they say, "can be fairer than that, particularly when we are willing to have you put a wet candidate over on us?"

That is about the situation. Southern leaders will publicly favor the nomination of a dry Democrat as well as the adoption of a dry platform. Privately they are fully prepared to be easily overcome so far as the nomination is concerned, but not on the platform. It to them is the vital thing. That explains the indignation aroused by the Raskob proposal, primarily a platform proposal. It also explains the greatly increased favor with which the candidacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt is regarded by Southern Democrats. It was the Roosevelt influence that induced the New York State Committee to adopt a resolution denouncing the Raskob effort as unwise. That was a good piece of politics for the Governor. It may have made Messrs. Raskob and Smith pretty mad, but the belief is strong they are not for him, anyhow, and it certainly endeared him to the South as nothing else could.

The fact is that at this writing Governor Roosevelt seems pretty well in the lead of the Democratic race—and is so recognized. In addition to the sympathetic stand with the South against the Raskob proposal, he commended himself greatly to the drys by his statement made over a year ago that there were other issues in the country more important than Prohibition. And because of his attitude on the Power issue he appeals to the Progressive element in the West. At the Washington conference of Progressives in March a decided slant in his direction was obvious. In addition he has the advantage of having twice carried New York for Governor, which normally entitles any man to figure as a likely Presidential nominee.

On the other side Governor Roosevelt is handicapped by the situation in his own State. There is no real loyalty to him upon the part of Tammany. Yet in his last campaign he was severely criticised for what was alleged to be lack of zeal in handling the investigation of revealed Tammany corruption. To some extent he has nullified this impression by post-election activity in the probe into police corruption in New York City. The fact is he will have in the convention lip loyalty from Tammany, but no heart loyalty such as they gave Al Smith in 1928. It is also true that there is an entire absence of desire to nominate Mr. Roosevelt on the part of the more potent unofficial Democrats in New York, who represent the big business element and are among the heavy financial contributors to the campaign. With these the Governor is not popular. There is a disposition to refer to him as a "Boy Scout" in politics and to dis-

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parage his ability to win. The favor with which he is regarded by Southern drys makes the wets regard him as a "trimmer" on Prohibition, though this is unfair to him and he is unequivocally for repeal. Also the quasi-indorsement given him by leaders among the Progressive Republicans from the "backward States" of the West has a tendency to hurt him in the East. The argument is made that the nomination of a candidate who appeals to the radical Insurgent group is no way for the Democrats to get the support of the business interests in the electorally important States; that this group has nothing they can deliver in the electoral college; that a flirtation with them by the Democratic candidate is to invite the Kiss of Death. Finally, there is the general belief that the Raskob-Shouse outfit now in control of the party machinery is not favorable to the Roosevelt nomination and that this reflects the feeling of ex-Governor Smith. Thus are listed the assets and liabilities of the Roosevelt candidacy, despite which he is the leading candidate. Some keen observers profess to see behind him much the same line-up, South and West, that was behind Mr. McAdoo in 1924, with this difference—regardless of the lukewarmness of Tammany and other New York influences, the New York vote in all probability will be his—at least for a while—and he will go before the convention as the New York candidate. He will not, however, have anything like a majority of the votes on the first ballot —the claim is he will not be able at any time to get the necessary two-thirds. This brings into the discussion the other available candidates. The two names besides Mr. Roosevelt most discussed are those of Owen D. Young, of New York, and Governor Albert C. Ritchie, of Maryland. There is no doubt at all of the weight of the Young movement. No man in the country has the confidence and respect of big business element in quite the degree that he has. His prestige and standing are of the highest; his qualifications generally admitted. On the subject of Prohibition he is a revisionist, against the whole theory of the Constitutional amendment and the unreasonableness of the Volstead Act, but not an avowed wet—in brief he is in position to appeal to both sides on this question without being charged with shifting his position. Further, there is a real Young sentiment throughout the country—a great many influential party men who look upon him as the "best available man" and who contend the Democrats cannot win—and should not —unless they nominate their "best available man." With Mr. Young it is urged the business support, invariably Republican in national elections, would be gained by the Democrats, and his nomination would insure victory in the indispensable New York group of States. There are two handicaps to the Young movement. One is the cry of "Power Trust" that would be raised against him. It is true that his views on the subject of power regulation and control are liberal—as liberal as those of either Roosevelt or Smith. Nevertheless his connection with the General Electric Company, the Radio Corporation, and Big Business generally are being used as arguments against his selection. They are arguments, however, that do not discourage his friends. So far as the Power issue is concerned, they aver that it is more rhetorical than real, exists largely in the minds of certain Progressive Senators, and is not one about which any large number of voters will be greatly stirred. Also, they believe that Mr. Young, if nominated, could handle the Power question in a way to vaccinate against it, and he probably could. At any rate, there are strong influences actively at work in New York to bring

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about his nomination, and a desire for his nomination outside. The idea is that should it be demonstrated after a number of ballots that Roosevelt cannot be named, the convention will turn to Young as the man with whom the party can most surely win. It is fair to Mr. Young to say that he is not conniving in the activity of his friends, that those closest to him are convinced of the sincerity of his desire not to be nominated, that they will be unable to get either affirmative or negative assistance from him in their effort. That the attitude of Ex-Governor Smith is likely to be the determining factor in the convention is clear. He is still the most popular Democrat in the party, its strongest figure in New York. He is a warm personal friend of Mr. Young and there has been considerable gossip before and since the Committee meeting that his relations with Governor Roosevelt lacked their old cordiality. Still it is hard to conceive of Mr. Smith's opposing the nomination of the man who three times put him in nomination for President, and who ran for Governor at his personal solicitation on the theory that his candidacy would help Smith in New York in 1928. It is, however, significant that when in Washington in March Smith was asked the point-blank question whether he favored the Roosevelt nomination he declined to answer. Some who talked with him then were convinced that he is himself a receptive candidate. The increase in wet sentiment and the absence of prosperity would, it is said, make another fight against Hoover a very different one—and a man who has once actively cherished the Presidential ambition never gives up his White House dream. It might easily be that Al would like another shot at it and wants the nomination himself. This, however, is not in accord with the belief of his most intimate friends. Their conviction is that he has not the remotest idea of being nominated, that he will never be a candidate again, that he is interested in the success of the Democratic party but has no delusions about 1932, no wish to run again. Further, I think it extremely doubtful that he could be nominated, as the opposition of the South to another fight along the 1928 lines would be far more intense than before. It is, however, interesting that the three most conspicuous Democratic possibilities for 1932 should all be in the one State—New York. It may be that the complications of this will compel the party to pick its candidate from some other section and it is the likelihood of this that encourages the friends of Ritchie to regard him as the logical selection. Next to Young and Roosevelt, Ritchie is the strongest figure and has the best chance, notwithstanding the smallness of the State of which he has been elected Governor four times for four-year terms; which beats all records and gives him high national visibility. Particularly will his chance be good if the Raskob element succeeds in obtaining a repeal platform, because his record and his reputation then make him the logical selection.

Ritchie is the pioneer public man in the fight against Prohibition and has more effectively and consistently preached the Democratic doctrine of States' Rights than any other. He is able, clean, and attractive. In addition, he is popular among party people, has the liking and friendship of the New York leaders primarily interested in Mr. Young, and there exists a real Ritchie sentiment in all parts of the country. In the event of a deadlock in the convention, in which it is apparent that neither Roosevelt nor Young can be named, he is the most likely compromise candidate. As things stand to-day, it seems to an impartial observer that one of the

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three—Roosevelt, Young, Ritchie—will be the Democratic nominee.

There, of course, will be a lot of other aspirants, but in the main these fall into the class of "favorite sons" or "long shots" and are concededly remote possibilities. Most of them are really candidates for the second place on the ticket, not the first place—or they will be put in with the idea of holding their State delegations intact during the early balloting for trading purposes when the time for the show-down arrives. These three—Young, Roosevelt, Ritchie—are the outstanding Democrats in the 1932 picture and, barring some such contingency as mentioned above, one of them will be named. Practically all the formidable figures of the 1920, 1924, and 1928 conventions have faded. No new ones of the requisite national visibility have arisen. Literally there are no others. James H. Reed of Missouri, a strong and vibrant man, has permanently retired from public life. McAdoo is politically dead. Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana, a man of real Presidential size and of distinguished public service, is over 70. The apparent inevitability of the Democrats' taking the wet side of the Prohibition issue makes it necessary to nominate a wet. General agreement about that eliminates from consideration as the head of the ticket such men as Ex-Governor Harry F. Byrd of Virginia and Senator Joe Robinson of Arkansas. There is talk of Newton D. Baker of Ohio. Ohio is an important State and it might be he could be named, but not many posted persons think so. One reason is that there are at least two other Democrats in his State—James M. Cox, a strong and well-liked man, who was a candidate in 1920, and Senator Robert Bulkley, elected as a wet last year—who are by no means free from Presidential aspirations. Another is that, more ardently and sincerely than any other man in the country, Mr. Baker is an advocate of the League of Nations. His great speech on the subject in the 1924 convention will be remembered by all who heard it. It inevitably would be revived as an issue should he be named. His party lacked the courage in 1924 to stand up on this issue. It avoided so much as a mention of it in 1928. Deliberately it has thrown it into the discard, afraid of it. That it will nominate the outstanding League of Nations man in the country, regardless of his fine qualities, is not very likely.

When all these facts are considered, the restriction of the Democratic probabilities to three men should be easy to understand. Age has eliminated some who otherwise would stand out; defeat has removed others; the conceded necessity of a wet has barred others; issues and sections have sidetracked more. There is always the dark-horse possibility but as things are it is a race with but three entries—Young, Roosevelt, Ritchie—all wet, all from the East, all except one — Roosevelt — conservative. At least that is the way it seems to-day.

Keen commentators will keep Scribner's readers in touch with the trends of politics during this important period leading up to the 1932 presidential election. In the July number—"Mr. Hoover's Sins of Commissions" by Silas Bent, "Art and Politics" by Albert Guerard. Other articles by Frank Kent will appear in later numbers

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The New American Music

By PAUL ROSENFELD

Seven Americans who are bringing freshness in style and feeling to music. In "European Music in Decay" (March SCRIBNER'S), Mr. Rosenfeld pointed out the increasingly cerebral and doctrinnaire quality in music composed in Europe. Here he indicates that the Americans are taking the lead.

THE progress of music in the Americas has recently become plain. During the past ten years a handful of composers scattered between Boston and Brazil have been delivering works impressively fresh in style and feeling. These original pieces compare favorably not only with the elder American music, feeble in feeling where it was relatively distinguished in style, as in the work of MacDowell and Loeffler, and heavy in style where it was virile in expression, as in that of Horatio Parker. They compare favorably with the contemporary European musical product. True, the American movement sports no masterly ability approaching Schoenberg's, no rhythmic invention approximating Strawinsky's, no fire and force proportionable to Bloch's. Scarcely one of the western composers shows the frequently careless but nonetheless healthy luxuriance of Milhaud, Hindemith, and several of their coevals. The new movement is still spotty and uncertain, only slowly gaining body and headway. The individual talents are not quite first fiddles; their styles not yet rounded and definitive; their works few, and more ambitious than consummate. But where the average European composer is excessively doctrinaire, the American is agreeably naïve. We only rarely find him, as even the best of his transatlantic fellows, arriving at the articulation of his idea by the circuitous route of theory. He is far more intuitive, expressing his coming world-feeling spontaneously. In this lies his advantage. For, spontaneity, naïveté in music is like grace in the spiritual life: the sign of strength, regeneration, and inspiration; and the sole satisfaction.

Who are these new American composers? They are the seven men, Henri Villa-Lobos in Rio de Janeiro, Carlos Chavez in the City of Mexico, Carl Ruggles and Roger Sessions both from New England, the New Yorker Aaron Copland, the Oklahoman Roy Harris, and the Italo-Frenchman Edgar Varèse settled in New York. They are by no means isolated events. Many other musical newcomers surround them, suggesting a proximate increase of their group. Henry Cowell's extraordinarily sonorous piano concerto, certainly last season's most important American production, very nearly places this young Californian in it. The Canadian Collin McPhee's Concerto for Piano and Wind Octette, in all its lightness, possesses a strength and solidity not hitherto shown by his diverting pieces: it too has caused

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us to revise an opinion. Virgil Thomson, Charles F. Ives, and Adolph Weiss have each something personal to express. George Antheil may still make good his earlier great promise; he has never ceased to be musicianly in all his flutterings. Leo Ornstein may yet recover from his cosmic colic; Dane Rudhyar from his theosophical debauch. It is surely too early to dismiss John Alden Carpenter and Louis Gruenberg (Oh, those post-Wagnerian Blues!), Leo Sowerby, Emerson Whithorne, Harold Morris, Marion Bauer, John Powell, and Howard Hanson. Meanwhile, such candidates as Wallingford Riegger, Theodore Chanler, Robert Delaney, Mark Blitzstein, and Israel Citkowitz make very impressive pledges. By and large, nonetheless, the American works which have recently called themselves to critical attention as the distinguished manipulations of sonorous material, and the musical releases of tension, are signed by one or another of the seven names, grouped together above.

They form an heterogeneous body, these new American compositions. The idioms and spirits of the seven composers are sharply individual. The style and feeling of Villa-Lobos' pieces, for example, are vulgar, in the word's best meaning. Like the Frenchman Chabrier's, the Magyar Bartok's, and Moussorgsky's among the Russians, the work of this young Brazilian is built on the music pertaining to and in usage among his people at large. His most characteristic compositions, published under the generic name of "Choros," a word translatable as "song" perhaps or "opus," frankly exploit the possibilities latent in the Brazilian and Amazonian songs and café music. Written for instruments in various combinations and vocal choruses; daringly built and often savagely expressive, they do not differ radically in spirit from the musical expressions to be heard in South American dance halls, bars, vaudevilles, and at native and Indian festivities; and stand bare of the elevation and nobility, the majesty and refinement, of the great religious and monumental works of European music.

But like the music of Chabrier and Bartok and Moussorgsky, they constitute an original music; even though not as largely and inclusively. They raise their synthetic material to an immense effectiveness and individuality. One has only to compare Villa-Lobos' handling of Brazilian popular and traditional melodies with Milhaud's, to recognize their edge. It is possible that, had Milhaud not come to Brazil during the World War and attempted artistic treatment of the native tangoes in "Los Suadados do Brazil" and "L'homme et son desir," Villa-Lobos might not have had his attention directed as quickly to their possibilities. And yet where Milhaud is pretty and Parisian, the young South American seems to give his inherited material the freshness and bite of a new revelation. His typical "Choros" is singularly raw and brilliant, brutal and comic: full of "life." It has been called Rabelaisian with some justice. There is a Gargantuan laughter, buffoonery and drunkenness in its extravagance and humor. But its quality is South American. Through it, we seem to approach a life in which garish colors and tropical fruits and raw joys are the norm; a life lacking in initiative, but simple and abundant. Brazil must be a gaudy place if it is like Villa-Lobos' music. Meanwhile, the Choroses have the distinction of being the first new American compositions to gain a vogue in Paris. But whether this is the result of the natural sympathy of the Latin capital for the developments in the Latin New World, or whether it is the sign that for all its originality Villa's music is closer to the tradition of European

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music than that of any living South or North American, it is too early to say.

Meanwhile, to the others of us, the seven odd musical expressions; odd for all their resemblances. A certain kinship between the music of Roger Sessions and that of the Brazilian composer whose figure we have just sketched exists, without a doubt. Like Villa-Lobos, Sessions is a composer of striking abilities, the interest of whose music flows more fully from his treatment of his subjects than from the intrinsic worth of the subjects themselves. Sessions is not a folklorist and vulgarian like his Brazilian fellow. His ideas have a more classical cast, coming to him as it were from the European tradition. One feels the influence of several European masters in his work. The composition which first drew attention to his powers and proclaimed the fact that a born musician had put in appearance in America—the sardonic incidental music to Andreyev's Black Masquers —shows the presence of Sessions' master, Bloch, together with that of the Strawinsky of *Petrushka*. The contrapuntal polyphony of Three Choral Preludes for Organ attests a recent study of Bach. The idiom of the first and third movement of the Piano Sonata, on the other hand, derives from the Field-Chopin nocturne style; while Sessions' vigorous symphony stands in the shadow of the recent Strawinsky. One may prefer it for its robustness and noble linearity to the compositions of the classicizing Russian. The fact remains that certain of its characteristic stratagems, particularly that of using unit groups of eighth notes irregularly divided, are to be traced directly to the latter's practice.

Sessions, like Villa-Lobos, nevertheless, infuses his material with character. Sonata and symphony have a beauty independent of their thematic content, born of the musicianly evolution of the ideas, the unbroken flow of the form, the density and consistency of the texture. The first and third movements of the sonata, the second of the symphony, have a clarity of facture and a dignity of line not to be matched in any American music, whether that of the fastidious Aaron Copland or in the works of the composers of the old New England school with which Sessions is sometimes associated. Nor is a brightly distinctive note missing: the individual touch we have remarked in all recent American music. A certain "sitting on the notes," a virile brunt and attack are very characteristic of Sessions' work, most happily perhaps in the second movement of the sonata with its thumping accents, and the aggressive opening and finale of the symphony. This latter work, terse and foursquare in its form, is easily the best piece of its class produced in America, the brilliant little symphony of Aaron Copland included. It contains Sessions' happiest workmanship and most personal tone, particularly in the deep-moving, characteristically melancholy middle movement, with its antiphonal string choirs. The symphony alone places him among the important living composers; and in view of its musical superiority to the work of the school from which it starts, the eclecticism which dogs Sessions' footsteps and shadows certain of his ablest conceptions, appears a passing weakness. We gather that in this truculent, harsh young New Englander, a grave and masculine musician waits for the crystallization which will permit a personal style to body him forth.

Meanwhile, the music of Carl Ruggles, Sessions' neighbor, furnishes more essential a contrast to that of his co-citizen than the popular rhapsodies of the Brazilian musician do. Points of similarity do exist between Ruggles' uncouth compositions and those of Ses-

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sions, no doubt. The melancholy and smothered passion of the eloquently weaving violins of Ruggles' Men and Mountains is somehow bloodbrother to the gray and nostalgia of several of his fellow New Englander's slow movements; most naturally so, since both expressions are racial, and as characteristic of the deserted New England countryside as any poem of Frost's or Robinson's. Still, there is almost nothing of Sessions' international eclecticism in Ruggles' homely and exalted music; very national if not regional in its quality. Its closest parallel is probably the literary one of Emerson's prose. Like the Concord philosopher, Ruggles is a mystic and a countryman too. Pieces as characteristic of him as Men and Mountains, Portals, Men and Angels, and the song cycle Vox Clamans in Deserto, go far to place their composer in the camp of the religio-philosophical musicians. Here, Ruggles is all elevation and apocalypse. To Men and Mountains he prefixes a quotation from Blake, "Great things are done when men and mountains meet." Over the symphonic ensemble Portals stand Whitman's lines:

> "What are they of the known
> But to ascend and enter the Unknown?"

and the music is an expression of the depths, an explosion, a scattering of the seeds of revelation. Still, Ruggles' music is a far cry from such volatile, easily ecstatic expressions as the pieces of the later Scriabine and the Franco-American Dane Rudhyar. It walks with sturdy strides; without fluttering or soaring. For all its elevation and prophetic pitch, and there are passages in which angry brasses dogmatize at imaginary congregations, it retains the Emersonian homeliness, roughness, and good humor. The quality of Ruggles' very distinguished harmonic schemes is curiously sober: refined but neither rich nor magnificent. And his instrumental effects, particularly when confined to timbres of a single family; trumpets in the middle section of Men and Angels, strings in Portals and the middle section of Men and Mountains, are equally earthy and bitter-sweet.

Ruggles' music is not invariably eloquent. His score labors slightly. The line at best is merely competent, built as it is of short reiterated phrases effortfully varied and intensified. Possibly this inhibition is due to the prophetic pitch. But there is more likelihood that it is the result of preconceptions. Ruggles has certain theories of form, of a Schoenbergian cast. Like the Viennese master, he prides himself on never doubling a note of his harmony, or repeating a note or its octave in his melody nor in the inner parts, till after the passage of from seven to nine other notes. It seems more than likely that the strained quality of his scores is to be attributed to these mathematical preoccupations. And still, these works are nonetheless strong and warm. Childlike, violent, and prophetic, Ruggles' music has the dignity of genuineness, manliness, necessity. And at its best, say in the middle section and finale of Men and Mountains, and the first movement of Portals, it has a deeply affecting exuberance, tapestrylike denseness and mysterious seductiveness.

Now, the music of the Oklahoman Roy Harris is also homely; but in a fashion very different from Ruggles'. The latter we have called Emersonian. Harris' parallel is with the prose of Mark Twain, Sherwood Anderson, and the other westerners, who, entirely eschewing the biblical, exalted note of Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, and the whole grand school, have based their styles upon the racy, salty vernacular and stayed on the ground. Harris is easily an important addition to this immensely potential racy movement; joining it

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in his novel melodic writing. That strikingly irregular line of his is composed of reconstitutions of thematic material on notes and intervals and with accents quite other than those on and with which it first appeared; but which nevertheless conserve its original character. The continuity is, meanwhile, assured by the pitch: apparently atonal, Harris' melodies actually move about ground-notes that remain implicit even though the melodies never quite come to repose on them. This half-voluntary practice gives his melodies their looseness, irregularity, roughness, and curious homespun quality.

Harris' sextet, piano sonata, and string quartet are indeed an humble music. Grandiose effects may appear in these works, unforgetably in the introduction and coda of the Sonata. Still most of them are gaunt, simple, sad; even in their shrill and defiant scherzo-movements. Somehow, they recall geraniums on the unpainted window sills of hill farmhouses; and make us feel the tragedies of people to whom things have been denied, and know things will never be granted them. What speaks in them is the voice of deep patience and submissiveness; and hearing them we seem to know many struggling, waiting, starved, and tragical existences upon this continent, in the bare farms, in the straight homes, long since and even now. Such expressiveness is theirs in spite of Harris' inexperience as a composer; testifying to inspiration; for the young Oklahoman is frequently unable to expand his ideas to advantage. Up to the present, his representative work is to be found in his scherzi: with the exception of the deeply moving slow section of the sonata, the most thoroughly satisfactory pages of his are those which occur under conditions of fast time. The slower tempi bring a music weaker in form and in color. Why this should be so we cannot say; for some reason, nonetheless, Harris has not yet found the secret of making a melody sing.

A rich mine waits upon this ability. No living American composer is fecunder or happier in ideas than Harris. To hear a page such as the opening one of the sonata is to hear some profound earth rhythm pulse; some aboriginal beat like an Indian tribe's. The harmonic sequences have a sharp originality; in fact, the whole feeling of his idiom is fresh, like clear water, a little cool but immensely grateful to the sense. Harris' range of emotion, too, appears to be a little broader than that of certain of his coevals æsthetically superior to him. Less savagely intense perhaps than Carlos Chavez', his mind nonetheless traverses a greater variety of moods. Inferior to Aaron Copland's in point of form, it comprehends a more human experience. Should Harris ever manage to compose as magnificently as he invents, we would have a great American music indeed.

Chavez the Mexican's music, again, touches Harris' music as that the pieces of Ruggles. It too is humble. In fact, you will find as little typically Wagnerian grandiloquence in the new American music as in the best of the contemporary European. For all this general modesty of means and effects, the individual manifestations of it are nonetheless quite divergent. Chavez' style, for example, is as distinct from Harris' with its large pathos as that is from the romantic one of Ruggles or the neoclassical one of Sessions. Chavez' idiom has an almost Amerindian laconism and abruptness; his melodies have not a little of the powerful droning of the red monodies. His style is pithy, devoid of rhetoric or eloquence, almost painfully economical of emphasis. Indeed, Chavez' characteristic compositions, the piano sonata and the Mexican pieces, are so dry, concise and compressed in

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their forms, so filled with teasing suspensions, arrests, and hollow octaves, so abrupt in their rhythms, that at a first hearing they are likely to appear wilful and illogical, mere sterile cactuses, peppers, and burrs; and only after repeated hearing to reveal their logic, grace, and way of breathing.

They constitute an original classical music, a music entirely free of literary associations and descriptive intentions, communicating feeling through the play of sonorities and contrasting forms. Work of this general type continues of course to be the object of the wide-spread neo-classical movement in contemporaneous Europe. But where the recent classicizing pieces of Strawinsky, Hindemith, Casella, and the rest bear the stigmata of intellectualism and theory in the shape of staleness and archaicism, Chavez' modal pieces have the eminent naturalness and freshness of the uninduced product. They recall no other classical music, seventeenth or eighteenth century. No echoes of Bach and Händel, Rameau or Clementi, obtrude in their curiously precise measures. In fact, nothing quite like these abrupt, grave rhythms, these stoical staccato and tattoolike themes and melodies, these skeletal forms, has previously appeared in instrumental compositions.

It is the music of beginnings. Its laconism, stoicism, decision, sing life obliged to adjust itself to difficult, unfriendly conditions; nonetheless aware of its own strength and beauty. We almost see them around us as this music sounds, the harsh phenomena, barren fields and fiery suns, barbarity of man and of nature. And still, what exultation, certain though not loud or long: what salutation of the inaccessible and difficult place gained by us, and the growths out of the bitter earth! The sun is here, the spring is here. Naked children hold branches in their hands. The ears of growing corn are lustrous. We have been guardless; but we have taken root and we survive and grow. Perhaps it is insolence to force this interpretation upon Chavez' music; and he might very readily disclaim all knowledge of such images. It is undeniable that his music depends on programmes as little as does the mighty Bach's. Still it is impossible for us to hear the pæan of his ballet, The Four Suns, or the piano sonata, or the Mexican pieces, without encountering them; and for us they are almost inseparable from the atmosphere, the spiritual climate in which his peppery music lies. Is it the Indian's feeling, the revolutionary Mexican's? Or is it that of all the Americans in their cruel, alien new world? Probably it is that of all three. Probably all three are one.

Two members of our diverse band remain, Aaron Copland and Edgar Varèse. The distinguishing traits of the music of these men include a grandiosity which contrasts with the more popular, humble, homely quality of the works of the others, simultaneously differing from the grandiosity of the European late-romanticists. Hardness of sonority and offhandedness of manner modify it: in all their effects of sublimity the pieces of these two Americans never exhibit the thickness, heaviness, pomposity which Wagner, Strauss, Mahler, and the rest invariably associated with majesty and splendor. Again, the curious American individuality: Copland's sonorities, for example, are slender, wiry, full of stony and metallic effects and shrill, cock-crow themes with wide intervals and defiant flourishes. Broad or burlesque, wistful or solemn, the movement of his music is light, athletic, full of natural snap and go.

It is a kind of Spartan art, hot jazzy coloring notwithstanding. The warm, human, expansive note, so characteristic

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of romantic music, is not frequent in Copland. While his feeling is usually intense, it is curiously objective and detached. A kind of pathos does speak out of certain of his pieces and movements: the opening sections of the piano concerto and the symphony; the third movement of the suite, Music for the Theatre; and the little nocturne for piano and violin. But it is scarcely more than a sort of wistfulness, and gentle longing. The tone of Rabelaisian irony, or of the impersonal statement of the law of things, is far more frequent, and of these three moods, the last, objective, one is probably the most deeply true to the composer. Foreshadowed in the third movement of the comparatively early symphony, it prevails in the most mature of his compositions: the second piece for string quartet; the little trio on Jewish themes for violin, cello, and piano, called Vitebsk; the pianoforte Theme and Variations, and the new orchestral Ode to be presented this season by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The ironic spirit seems to have been a passing phase, connected with if not conditioned by Copland's temporary predilection for jazz effects and rhythms. For Copland very naturally seized upon the possibilities for burlesque latent in his jazz material; and while a fox-trot measure harmlessly underlies the idyllic little third movement of Music for the Theatre, the rest of the movements and the other pieces built on jazz rhythms and motives, the serenade for violin and piano, the first piece for string quartet, and above all the body of the powerful piano concerto, are filled with satire and irony.

Copland is perhaps the most critical of the new Americans; exquisite in his sense of his materials and comprehension of their potentialities. True, compositions of his momentarily suffer from a certain inflexibility and hesitancy. He is occasionally given to an overuse and exhaustion of his material; and some of his works, the second string-quartet piece and the trio, are a trifle indecisive in attack. However, his pieces are for the greater part economically built, clear and sharp of edge, and successfully architectural in character. And while they are evidently the work of a young man, wanting a certain mellowness and wider inclusivity, they are plainly the work of a poet: embodying the vaulting impulse of American life, and the excitement of machinery; finding a form for the speed and impersonality of the present age. And one of his pieces, at the very least, is of absolutely first water: the Theme and Variations for pianoforte.

As for Varèse's sonorities—. But let us attend a moment to the protestations hitherto excited by identifications of Varèse's music with the American movement. These objections have based themselves on the fact that Varèse was born of French and Italian stock in France, and resided throughout his youth in Paris; and have taken the form of arguments to the effect that no one as alien to American life in early experience as this man, could, even on American soil and in sympathy with the life upon it, produce work sufficiently relative to the collectivity, the past, the unconscious, the soil, the spirit called America, to deserve the generic name. Effective counter-arguments have been advanced by several critics; most valiantly by Lawrence Gilman. He pointed to the generation of French dramatic music by the Florentine, Lulli, the impulsion of French symphonic music by the Belgian, César Franck, as to facts contradicting claims that no artist is able to work in a spirit he has not inherited or got by early training. Others reinforced his point with indications of the similar positions of Lucian in Greek literature, Apuleius in

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Latin, and Vielé-Griffin and Stuart Merrill in French; and demonstrations of the partial alienism of the German Romanticists Brentano, Chamisso and De la Motte-Fouqué. And we might well call these arguments conclusive, and dismiss the question as adjudicated, did we not feel that the most important, most decisive proof of the naturalization of Varèse's music has managed to get itself entirely overlooked. This is neither the possibility of such a naturalization; nor even the composer's own claim for his music; nor his significant participation in the group-movement and practical encouragement of his fellow members, effective as these arguments ought to be. It is the feeling, the quality of his work itself; and for us, both are as true to American life as that of any acceptedly native product.

The music of Varèse is immediately distinguishable by its extreme and unwonted shrillness and stridency, its piercing golden screams, sudden suspensions and silences, rapid crescendi and diminuendi, new acrid opulencies of harmony, titanic volumes. On first acquaintance, his orchestra sounds like the mechanical calls, whistles, and roars of the giant ports, the grinding ground-bass of the hooting city streets. Later, the apparent mimicry of city nature disappears, making way for the discovery of a musical structure built of aural sensations of a fabulous delicacy and power. No doubt, a sensibility to the new noises amid which we dwell, keener than any hitherto found among composers, is at work in these strange high symphonies; but at work in music much as that of Picasso in the visual field. Varèse has not formed his style of the strange tones and timbres distilled by the industrial world, any more than Picasso his of the visual ones. The new sounds have merely transformed musical style in him through their effects on his hearing and his imagination; as the new sights the color of the Parisian.

They are formally, architecturally built up, these novel sonorities, metallic and eerie effects and dynamics of Varèse's: sometimes a trifle too schematically, as in the early monster-poem called Ameriques; more freely, with a happy looseness and playfulness in the later Hyperprism; with terrific tension in his last two pieces, Integrales and Arcanes. The form is intensely compressed. The themes have a telegraphic abruptness; their developments are precipitous and continual. In effect, all these constructions are curiously "cubical." Due to the air-pockets, suspensions of sound between various thematic metamorphoses, the music seems to move in solid masses, and remain rigorously in them. Even the intensifications and climaxes do not shatter these shining cubes. The more powerful emphases and dynamic merely force rigid sound into the air with violence, much like the masses of impenetrable bodies in collision. The severity of style and impersonality of the sonorities themselves, brazen, percussive, massive, brute, contribute to the effect of squareness of these towering, reaching bursts of sound.

Indeed, they resemble man-made things, these symphonies; objects in brass and steel, bridges, instruments, electrical waves, or the vibrations and sounds made by such things; and are most unlike the naturally rippling, soughing, surging older music. A certain humanity and naturalism is absent from them, without doubt; swing of the body, fever of the flesh, song of the nerves in passionate exaltations. Here, all appears as if engraved with steel instruments, weighed in iron scales, heard with stethoscopes, registered with seismographs. Nature, the texture, movement, and law of things, is felt in this music much as science feels it; as the

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fine scientific brain sees and hears and knows. Varèse is the musician of science, perhaps, and his work an attempt to realize the experience of modern mathematical physics. During the performance of Arcanes, for example, feelings seemed to penetrate cold, interstellar space, to feel material volumes signalling and responding to each other, and become fantastically habituated to the gloomy valleys and arches of the non-human universe. Nonetheless, unromantic as they are, these strange symphonies bring one into touch with humanity. What stirred and exulted in Integrales was the mass feeling of man, the god of collective strength. And Arcanes seemed to project the search and discovery impulse, at the root of the artist "the æsthetic emotional man" no less than the scientist; the surge toward a vision of things satisfying the entire being.

Precisely this combination of the non-human and the neo-human, in association with the material sonority of the music, identifies these creations with New York and America. Scientific perspectives, mechanical ability, and collective forms are, of course, confined not alone to these regions. But here they are most in the blood. Here they have most freely transformed nature in their own images and created a new landscape, a new atmosphere. And expressions of this spirit cannot but have the style and shape and tempo of the life they have formed, and increasingly dominate.

A miscellany, indeed, these new American compositions, motley enough to make one hesitate before joining them together and proclaiming a common movement behind the lot! Prudence seems in order before something as heterogeneous in style and origin, and still as largely on the stocks, as these seven bodies of work appear to the casual glance. But the longer one looks, the more superfluous one finds it. These works by seven musicians scattered between Rio de Janeiro and Boston are homogeneous, for all the multiplicity of their origins and backgrounds; for all the individuality of their styles. Not only are they products of a number of men who, despite their independence, have to a great extent worked in sympathy with each other and in group-consciousness. Not only have they sprung up during the same period, the last ten years, at the hands of coevals: both, facts most significant of unity of impulsion. They have all a quality of freshness, of daring and originality. They have all the kind of naïveté, of spontaneity setting them off from the contemporaneous European expressions. They have, even the conservative Sessions, used musical motifs current in western life. They have simultaneously lifted the level of musical production in America to impressive levels. And what they have written has in definite ways naturalized us to our continent. May not their very heterogeneity reveal their kinship, as children of the democratic New World? To us it does: and recognition of a continent-wide quickening of the musical life, and heraldry of its growth and approaching majority, appear the very order of the day.

"Ghost Writer of Jazz," by Earl Sparling, the story of the man who has had much to do with the course of popular American music, yet is comparatively unknown to the public, will appear in SCRIBNER'S *soon.*

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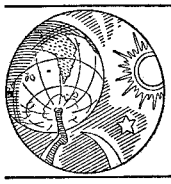
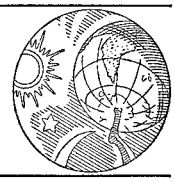


STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in American life to-day



Incorporating Uncle George

By JOHN CARTER

"Dear Uncle George:

"I hate to trouble you and if what I ask does not seem practicable please excuse my bothering you. The fact is, Ella has been sick and the office cut my pay, and I need a little money to see me through the winter. I wondered whether you could lend me . . ."

Most of us have an "Uncle George" in the background, an elderly, wealthy gentleman, perhaps a bachelor or a widower, irascible, and none too generous with his money. Those of us who have not written him at one time or another have been tempted to do so this winter of our economic discontent. Perhaps this time the old codger will come through. Perhaps not. Probably not. The virtue of our system is that it offers dazzling material rewards to the individual in good times; its chief vice is, that in bad times it exposes the individual, stripped of human support, to the iron laws of industrial supply and demand. In an emergency, therefore, when our own resources are exhausted, we turn to Uncle George. If he is unable or unwilling to help us, we turn to the community or to the government.

The principal difficulty about Uncle George is that he is not really organized to help us. Four years out of five we don't need his help and he has better uses for his money than to lend it or give it away to his struggling nephews. Of course, the day sometimes comes when Uncle George goes long on Anaconda and then decides to make his home—for the immediate future at least—with "dear Mary's boy, Jack." And of course neither Jack nor his wife is organized to provide permanent board and lodging for a bankrupt and benevolent uncle.

Nevertheless, in canvassing our social system for a means to anticipate and mitigate these scandalous periods of depression, we cannot ignore the fact that the basic social unit is not the individual, but the family. Every family, habitually, helplessly, and reluctantly, is called upon to help its lame dogs over the stiles. Here a father helps his daughter pay for a confinement, there a brother helps his sister's husband get a new job; a mother squeezes a few dollars out of her housekeeping funds to buy her son a new overcoat; an uncle occasionally invests money in his nephew's business; daughters help support their parents, and husbands provide homes for orphaned nieces.

The instinct or tradition which makes this system possible is so general that it has seldom been organized. It derives from patriarchal society, when wealth consisted of lands and herds, when family groups were compact clans, and when formal organization was superfluous. That easy era is dead. Families no longer march like armies; they scatter like foragers. The forms of wealth are so diverse and the opportunities for acquiring it so dispersed that there is no longer any sense in generation after generation living out their lives in the same area and in the same mode of life. When Uncle George lived on the big farm across the river it was one thing; when Uncle George lives on a bundle of securities in a safe-deposit box or on a profession which may take him from London to Shanghai or Buenos Aires, it is another. Even the farmers are being industrially organized to-day, with co-operatives, banking and warehouse facilities, and federal marketing assistance. Unless Uncle George and all that he stands for is to vanish utterly and to leave us naked between the unsympathetic machine and the inflexible state, we have got to form a new concept of him and of our relation to him in the family society system.

Two hundred and fifty years ago a certain family of Yorkshire yeomen emigrated to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Until 1850 their history, traced from father to son, was confined to a small area of land north of Boston, while their careers rang the regular changes on "farmer, merchant, clergyman, farmer, mer-

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chant, clergyman . . .," it taking two generations of shirt-sleeves to make one "white-collar" generation. But for the industrial revolution this family pattern might have been repeated indefinitely, for theirs was a dogged, hard-headed, and sufficiently prolific breed.

Then the modern miracle took place. The great-grandfather of the present generation left New England, moved to New Jersey and built a small factory. After forty years he died leaving what was then considered a respectable fortune but would now be regarded merely as a good sum of money. Before he died, however, the industrial era had America in its grip. His eldest son inherited the business. His second son became a doctor, his third a lawyer, and his fourth a clergyman. These were preeminently the genteel professions of his age. By the time these sons had grown middle-aged, opportunities were widening and, though only one of them married money, they all had married and prospered and had children.

The physician had three children: one became a professor, one a musician, and one married a mining engineer. The lawyer's two daughters married business men, while his son became a gentleman-farmer, expensively cultivating the soil of New England which had sustained the family for generations. The clergyman's children, with their appropriate wives and husbands, included professions as variegated as diplomacy, journalism, banking, aviation, and the woollen business. The family is now freed from the risks of climate and agriculture.

Gone is that family's old vocational solidarity; gone too is its geographical solidarity. The grandchildren live scattered from New York to Chicago and Washington. *Their* children may range the world for a living. This may seem a pity to those sentimentalists who miss the groaning family around the groaning table at Thanksgiving, but from the economic point of view it is eminently sensible. Otherwise, the family might just as well have remained in Yorkshire.

The way this new system works out in hard cash is an interesting example of the opportunity for spreading the risks which industrial civilization has given to the family. Here is a family group of four direct generations, embracing only grandparents, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters and first cousins, and the great-grandchildren. In the first generation, there is only one member, the grandfather, now retired from business, with an income from investments of $20,000. The second generation numbers nine aunts and uncles. It has a total income of $325,000 (of which, however, $250,000 goes to Uncle George, who made a pile during the war), and only three direct minor dependents. The third generation includes nineteen—brothers and sisters and first cousins. Although this generation already has produced a fourth crop of twenty-one great-grandchildren, its total income amounts to only a trifle more than $100,000. Thus, where their parents (omitting the opulent Uncle George) and uncles have an average individual income of $10,000, they themselves average only $5,600 and are carrying the heaviest direct burden of any stratum of the family.

In our industrial system a latent economic strength such as this, capable of gross earnings of over $500,000 a year, could be capitalized at 6 per cent and would rank as a $9,000,000 corporation. In the world of commerce such a situation would simply clamor for a merger. But as it is simply a family phenomenon, and as families are taken for granted, nothing is done about it. Hence the impulse to write Uncle George for a loan (which will probably be refused) rather than to take advantage of the technic of modern business and to incorporate Uncle George in such a way that he will always be there to help his nephews from generation to generation.

To those who would oppose this idea as sapping individual initiative, it can only be defended as a return to the first principles of the family, forced on us by modern conditions. As depressions come and go and as industrial society approaches stabilization we will have to devise an economic shock-absorber, unless the full burden of depression is to be piled on the taxpayer. Inasmuch as the taxpayer himself will be in need of a shock-absorber, the idea of a Family Trust Fund is about the only available method of taking the edge off hard times and taking full advantage of good ones.

The principle of the Family Trust is the principle of savings and insurance, plus some of the advantages of corporate wealth, concentrated in a single fund and administered by a sort of family council, or, if that is impractical, through a bank. In most families, however, there is generally at least one older member who is in a position to devote a little time and energy and a lot of self-importance in operating the family finances. The fund would be collected on the basis of an income tax and would, to a varying degree, be substituted for the individual savings and individual insurance by which now each member of the family strives, with pitiful inadequacy, to protect himself against all contingencies. But the indi-

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vidual is too weak to stand alone all the time. His savings melt in an emergency and he is often compelled to surrender or discontinue his insurance in the face of prolonged difficulties.

Let it be assumed, therefore, that a Family Trust is established by a family contract, binding on all adult members of the family in the direct line. Each member is entitled to one share in the Family Trust. The compact provides that 10 per cent of all income shall be contributed to the fund by the members of the family. On marriage, the individual contribution drops to 5 per cent, so as to make it possible for the married member to participate in his wife's Family Fund, and vice versa. On reaching majority, every member of the family shall have an opportunity to enter the compact; failure to comply with its terms shall lead to surrender of membership; membership when lost can be restored on a year's notice, by paying dues, etc. Any lawyer could work out the details.

The real question is, how would it work? In one representative upper-middle-class family the first generation would pay $2,000 a year, the second $15,000 a year, and the third about $4,000—say, $20,000 in all. While this is a large sum, it is probably not greatly in excess of the amount annually expended by the same family for insurance, savings, aid to various members of the family or to charity. If the Family Trust were operating in this case, these funds would be sent to Uncle George, who, being a man of wealth, would know how to invest them, and, being a man of wealth, would not be inclined to dole them out recklessly. If Uncle George tried to be too autocratic, however, he could be overruled by the family council, acting as board of directors.

The employment of the fund would be the real test of this system. Without affecting any expert knowledge of correct principles of banking and insurance, one might assume that about a quarter of it could best be utilized to purchase group insurance for the family. In this particular case there would be fifteen members of the family to be protected by an annual premium of $5,000. Speaking very roughly, one would assume that group insurance, with trimmings, could be bought for $20 a thousand, which would give the family a total insured value of $250,000, or a per capita policy of $17,000, which is fair enough protection for anybody in this world of changing values.

Half of the total fund—or $10,000—would be put into the reserve fund, the family war-chest. The reserve should not be permitted to sink below the total average contribution for a year; that is, it should not—in this case—be allowed to fall below $10,000, which should be invested in trustee stocks and other forms of sound collateral. The free portion of the reserve fund may be utilized for the following family emergencies: legal defense of a member of the family in a criminal action; payment of the debts of a deceased member of the family when his estate is insufficient for that purpose; loans up to one-third of the free portion of the fund for unusual medical expenses—operations, confinements, etc.—when the family council is satisfied that the member concerned is unable to meet the bills within a reasonable time out of current income; second mortgages, again up to one-third of the free portion of the fund, on homes purchased by members of the family, approved in advance by the administrator of the fund; or for any controlling emergency accepted as such by the family council.

The remaining fourth of the family fund should be put into a family promotion fund and used to finance members of the family in promoting their professional and business careers. This fund, however, may not be used without the approval of the family council and should always take the form of a loan to the member of the family concerned. Loans from the fund, if unpaid, can be recovered from insurance, in order that the family fund itself may become a continuing force in family affairs. This is especially true of loans from the family promotion fund. Young George, for example, may have a chance to purchase a junior partnership in his law office. Cousin Ralph may see a chance to buy up a good medical practice in Cleveland, or his cousin Herbert may show signs of artistic talents sufficient to justify sending him to the Beaux Arts. Jim's political career may assume proportions which will justify family support for his campaign funds, or Fred may discover that his advance in the dry-goods business would be helped by a course at the Harvard School of Business Administration. Exactly so, in another sphere, Tom might get a chance to buy a filling-station on a good corner, or Tony to acquire a half-interest in a fruit-stand. This is a feature of family life which is seldom developed. It is a feature which, more than any other thing, might justify and perpetuate the family system in modern life.

It is curious that the only race which has made a definite application of these principles should be the Jewish race, and it is significant that the Jewish people are, to put it mildly,

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economically successful and self-supporting. We can learn a good deal from any people which has survived as many calamities and vicissitudes as have the Jews, and the more we study their history the clearer it becomes that their brilliant emergence from repeated catastrophes is due primarily to their intelligent ordering of family finance. Some day, taught by painful experience, we may adapt ourselves to their example.

The present status of family finance is admittedly unsatisfactory. None of us cares to ask Uncle George for help, and Uncle George himself resents being made to feel miserly when he refuses our requests. We've got beyond the era when family help was available around the corner and when family wealth was a mere matter of fields and flocks. The old economic family has disintegrated. The new family, though wealthier in the aggregate, is individually more vulnerable. The price of not keeping all of our eggs in one basket is the fact that some of the eggs will be smashed. When the smashed eggs happen to be our own flesh and blood, we can't ignore the mess and we can't help resenting the resultant conflict between coherent family feeling and incoherent family finance. So long as the family is the only social bulwark between the individual and the street, we have got to devise some means of giving economic substance to the family ramparts. After all, Uncle George may go broke or we ourselves may become the target for family borrowers. Under these circumstances, modern business and the integration of industry suggest that the most practical method is not to set up twenty weak little funds of insurance and savings, but to concentrate on one strong family fund; and not to borrow from Uncle George, but to incorporate him and borrow from the corporation.

Is This the End of a Civilization?

By LOTHROP STODDARD

To say that we live in "transition times" is to utter a commonplace. Any major upheaval like the Great War must have a readjustive aftermath. Indeed, strictly speaking, the times are always changing; for even in the quietest periods the old is continuously giving place to the new.

Our query, however, transcends both the slow transformative factors always at work and the healing process which repairs war's ravages. What we have in mind is something deeper and more far-reaching. Specifically, it is this: Are we now living in what future generations will term the close of a well-defined civilization—the end of an "age"?

We know that such crucial periods do occur. History proves that, now and then, a decided change in the "mental climate" takes place, analogous to the planetary shift which ushers in a new geologic epoch. So it was in antiquity's latter days, and again at the close of mediæval times. At such periods the basic outlook on life profoundly alters. Men lose not merely faith in but interest in traditional certitudes; while, conversely, other matters previously ignored or minimized become of primary concern.

This shift of interest and allegiance entails the most profound consequences. Ideas and ideals, laws and institutions, manners and customs are transformed as thoroughly and (historically speaking) as rapidly as the lush flora and fauna of a carboniferous period are succeeded by life-forms appropriate to an era of extreme dryness or of glacial cold.

To show that such crucial epochs do occur is, however, by no means to prove that we today stand on the threshold of one of those major turning-points in mental and cultural evolution. In the past, men have often thus asserted, and history has shown the falsity of their deductions. When Augustus Cæsar founded the Roman Empire, poets and philosophers alike confidently proclaimed the birth of a new age. But we now know that what really happened was a stabilization of classic civilization,

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which continued to flourish for many generations. The real turning-point came some three centuries later, when the ancient world was disrupted by social convulsions and civic strife.

Yet the men of that unhappy period did not realize that the "mental climate" was changing. They fondly believed classic civilization to be immortal, and it has remained for historians of our own day to point out how sudden and how drastic was the decline. Ferrero depicts classic civilization standing substantially intact as late as the middle of the third century A. D.—and only fifty years later lying in hopeless ruin. Even when the decadent Roman Empire formally gave up the ghost as the puppet Cæsar Romulus Augustulus was deposed by the barbarian chief Odovaker, the fact went almost unnoticed amid the hurly-burly of the times. Every modern schoolboy memorizes the date 476 A. D. as one of the great dividing-lines of history; yet among all the contemporary data which have come down to us, we have only one letter written by a Roman gentleman to a relative in the provinces which descants upon its genuine significance.

Much the same thing is true to-day. Take the Great War, for example. It is not unlikely that future historians will date the "mental change" marking the close of an era from the Great War and its aftermath; just as contemporary students of Roman history date the crumbling of classic civilization from the catastrophes of the third century A. D. Yet, though we still live within its shadow, we have already acquired enough perspective to realize that the Great War was a symptom rather than the root of the changes which are sweeping over our world. We now know that whoever *precipitated* the war did not *cause* it; that it had its origins long before 1914; and that if the precise war which did then occur had been averted, something quite similar would probably soon have taken place.

That our world is to-day being rapidly transformed seems certain. The only question is as to the degree of the transformation. Is it merely an important phase of a longer cycle, akin to the Napoleonic War phase of a century ago? Or is it a major turning-point in world history?

Only the future can answer with positive certitude. Yet the problem is at once so fascinating and so important that a reasoned inquiry seems well worth while. And an impressive body of evidence from several distinct angles clearly tends to show that the latter hypothesis is valid; that our civilization is nearing its end.

History teaches us that climacteric changes are heralded by certain signs and portents: The established order suffers from a chronic and growing *malaise*. There is increasing dissatisfaction with what is, coupled with a restless and rather aimless search after the new. Faith decays. Lastly, men lose interest in many things hitherto deemed of vital import, transferring their attention to other matters. Let us see to what extent these phenomena apply to our present situation.

For more than a generation, comparisons between our times and those of Rome's decline have been increasingly made. And in many ways the parallel is a striking one. There is a similar loosening of the idealistic and social fabric, kindred economic strains and stresses, and specific evils such as an excessive drift to the cities and crushing taxation. The catastrophic events of the past two years have revealed with startling clearness our economic ills. More and more, we are coming to realize that our whole financial and industrial system is to-day on trial; that the current world depression is no mere dip in the "business cycle," but an economic crisis of unparalleled magnitude.

Despite the gravity of the present crisis, few competent analysts believe that it will end in downright collapse. World orders are not wont to pass in a day or to vanish overnight. The consensus of opinion is that we shall presently convalesce from this acute attack. But there will be no return to "normalcy." And, in time, other crises of a similar nature will presumably arise. The economic drift seems to be setting that way, and will probably continue until new factors somehow come into play.

Turning from economics to politics, we find a similar state of flux and crucial incertitude. Europe, Asia, Latin America, our own United States even, display in diverse ways a profound political instability. Two novel political philosophies have arisen: Communism and Fascism. They differ markedly from one another. Yet they both flout with equal emphasis the whole political ideology of our times. Venerable concepts such as democracy, parliamentary government, and the will of the majority are scorned as sentimental phrase-mongering or unctious hypocrisy. Both Communists and Fascists are frankly undemocratic, despise public opinion, have no respect for majorities; each envisages a new political system abysmally different from our own.

All this does not imply that either Communism or Fascism is destined to say the last word. But it certainly does imply a dynamic stirring of things radically new. And equally

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does it imply the growing prevalence of popular dissatisfaction; the restless quest for something different from existing institutions and ideals.

The decay of faith in traditional religion is well known and almost universally acknowledged. What is not so widely recognized, however, is the impending decline of faith in our age's outstanding dogma—*science*.

Only yesterday, scientific certitude was hailed as a fairly good substitute for revealed theology—at least as an adequate basis for a stable philosophy of life. That attitude still prevails among educated men, while a less rationalistic "belief" in science has permeated the unthinking masses to a considerable extent.

For this there was good reason. Some three centuries ago, Newton and other bold pioneers of thought laid down certain basic principles regarding the nature of the physical world which, until very recently, were regarded as axioms, and upon which the whole edifice of "modern science" was based. Even a generation ago, the cosmos appeared to have been charted in fairly definite fashion. Our world seemed a substantial affair made up of indestructible atoms, run by indestructible energy, and governed by "iron laws." Such a world tended to produce an attitude of quiet certitude. Modern science having sketched the broad outlines of the cosmos, the task of future generations seemed destined to be mainly a filling in of details.

Then, about the turn of the present century, startling news began to filter out from quiet research laboratories. A series of amazing discoveries were changing the whole aspect of the universe. The doctrine of relativity, the quantum theory, and other carefully tested hypotheses shattered scientific postulates which had endured for centuries. "Matter," in the traditional sense of the word, has disappeared; and our seemingly solid world (including our own bodies) resolves itself into countless systems of protons and electrons, pithily described as disembodied charges of electricity, constructed somewhat on the pattern of our solar system, and moving with prodigious rapidity. As for space and time; instead of being independent and absolute entities, they are coming to be regarded as merely aspects of something yet more fundamental, which is neither space nor time, but a kind of union of them, termed space-time, having four dimensions, of which time is the fourth.

No wonder that scientists, standing amid the ruins of their former certitudes, are hesitant and uncertain. But the practical effects of their new mood, as their uncertainty spreads to the laity, can hardly be overestimated. Bertrand Russell suggests that the new scientific scepticism of which Eddington is the exponent may ultimately lead to the collapse of our scientific era, just as the theological scepticism of the Renaissance led to the collapse of the theological era known as the Middle Ages.

Now with eminent scientists like Eddington adopting an attitude of philosophic doubt, and with eminent philosophers like Bertrand Russell proclaiming *The Twilight of Science,* it is clear that the average layman's slant on life is in for some pretty drastic revision. And such shifts in mental attitude ultimately modify everything, from law and custom to morals and culture. For, as another well-known scientist, Professor Whitehead, trenchantly puts it: "Philosophy builds cathedrals before the workmen have moved a stone, and destroys them before the elements have worn down their arches. Philosophy is the architect of the buildings of the spirit, and it is also their solvent."

If these are not harbingers betokening a basic change in the "mental climate," it is hard to imagine what such heralds of a new time should be. But the full tale is even yet not told. For literature and the arts—all those phenomena grouped under the generic name of *culture*—still have their word to say.

Students of cultural history have long understood that every well-marked epoch is characterized by a definite art-ideal; while, conversely, a basic change in art-ideals denotes an epochal change as well.

Now an extant culture, like a spoken language, is a living thing, embodied in various literary and artistic forms that express both the creative urge of the artist and the appreciation of the public to which he appeals. The vital bond in all this is, obviously, *interest*—the reciprocal interest of artist and public in each cultural phase, from poetry and prose to painting, sculpture, architecture, and music.

So long as a particular art-ideal persists, the attendant cultural forms progress in harmonious evolution, with an ever-growing refinement of technic and achievement. But when a change in the "mental climate" sets in, its chill breath blights the art-ideal, and the cultural forms either wither away or ossify into stereotypes void of inner meaning.

Since the true artist must have something to say, he is no longer interested in expressing himself in the classic mode, while his audience becomes less and less interested even when he

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tries to do so. The upshot is that the creative artist revolts against the oppressive burden of an outworn culture, and consciously or instinctively tries to say something new in a radically new way. The obvious first step is to repudiate his old technic and either go back to primitive artistic methods or adopt artistic forms borrowed from alien cultures.

This innovative trend in transition times has, until recently, been ill understood. Yet it explains much that was hitherto mysterious about periods of cultural decline. Roman history probably affords the most striking example. During the early Empire, the classic art-ideal was elaborated to an almost infinite extent. Never was there a technic more delicate or more wide-spread. From one end of the Roman world to the other, a high level of standardized artistic capacity prevailed.

Then, suddenly, in the third century, all is changed. Classic art precipitately decays. Its elaborate technic gives place to forms so crude and primitive that they are well termed "barbarous," and this archaic retrogression is further complicated by Oriental influences.

Until recent years, this sudden collapse of Roman culture was ascribed solely to the political and economic ills of the period. The Romans, it was said, *could* no longer produce good classic art under the troubled conditions which prevailed. Yet the Empire, though somewhat impoverished, was still intact; the frontiers still withstood the barbarians, and the wide-spread cultural tradition ran so deep that it should not have been easily forgotten.

Noting these facts, competent students of the problem have of late asserted that the change was due largely to the fact that the Romans no longer *wanted* to reproduce the old models. In his monumental history, Rostovtzeff intimates that one of the main reasons for the fall of classic civilization was that the Romans *got bored*. In other words, they were no longer *interested* in the indefinite repetition of cultural forms which had become wearisome to them, since their minds were beginning to run on other matters and their souls were questing after other ideals.

But that is precisely what the protagonists of the various insurgent artistic schools are telling us to-day. These creators of what seem to many of us weirdly bizarre effects in painting, sculpture, poetry, and music assert that the classic art of our time is "finished"; that it has become flat, stale, and unprofitable; that other methods *must* somehow be found to say new things in a new way. Thus, in painting, we find cubists, vorticists, and others throwing overboard all the old technic, reviving primitive methods, and aping the Orient or the crudities of African savages. And this trend is equally true of the "ultramodern" schools in sculpture, literature, and music. One and all, they express the same contemptuous rejection of the old, the same feverish quest for the new.

Here, then, we have an impressive body of evidence, drawn from such diverse sources as economics, politics, science, philosophy, and art. All this evidence points one way; namely, that a mental shift of major proportions is at hand. How rapid that shift will be is, of course, uncertain. In the past, such epochal changes have taken several generations, though to-day the general *tempo* of events seems to be more rapid than it ever was before.

Assuming that a new epoch *is* at hand, we are naturally prone to ask: What sort of an age will it be? That is a query upon which speculation has been rampant this past decade, and the answers have been almost grotesquely varied.

At one end of the scale we find the ultra-optimists who see a millennium of applied science just around the corner. At the other end of the scale are the infrapessimists who, viewing modern man as a savage toying with dynamite, predict a supreme catastrophe which will wipe out all civilization and leave only a few degraded beings grubbing amid a blasted desolation. Then there are the "revivalists," bent on modelling the new era according to some past epoch: humanists, for instance, who want a new Renaissance; or stout mediævalists like Belloc and Chesterton who assert that ever since the twelfth century mankind has been going to the devil.

Amid such a multitude of counsellors, where may wisdom be found? And may not the reality, when it shall emerge, confound us all by proving to be something quite different from anything yet surmised?

All we can surely say is that we moderns seem to be moving swiftly onward toward the new—and the unknown.

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Girl Graduates—Ten Years Out

By BERNICE KENYON

THERE is no longer any novelty in the higher education of women. College for girls is the accepted thing, and even with the higher entrance requirements, most girls of average intelligence can get in somewhere if they want to, and nobody is going to think them queer or unwomanly for doing so.

But like all things which lose their novelty, college for women has of late years lost some of its interest and attractiveness; and one hears more and more to-day the discussions of parents and daughters as to whether or not college for women is worth while. Wouldn't the daughters be wasting four years if they went? Isn't their theoretic college training going to make them uneasy and dissatisfied later on, when they want to take up their normal lives as wives and mothers? Everybody knows that the college girl tends to marry late, and sociologists are forever worrying about her low record as a mother. Is college standing in her way? Is she really likely to get enough out of it to warrant her going at all?

Back in 1900 college girls were not merely odd, they were sacrosanct—pledged by their superior training and the time and money that had been spent on them, to go forth and make the world a better place to live in than it would have been if they had stayed at home. A large proportion of them were considered unmarriageable before ever they went to college, and therefore destined for an intellectual career. Most of the others had strong intellectual ambitions. Figures from Barnard, compiled by the *Alumnæ Register,* show that only 9 per cent of women who were graduated by the year 1900 had the temerity to forsake their learned calling and marry; but when they did marry they fulfilled their obvious duty toward the race by producing an average of almost three children apiece.

By 1910 or even 1915 the college graduate was not so much sacrosanct as odd, slightly freakish. Grave doubts as to the possibility of a normal life for college women certainly existed as late as 1918, two years before the graduation of my own college class. At that time we were lectured to by authorities armed with statistics, who told us that our chances of marrying were only 50 per cent, and that in our old age we should probably show no better record as mothers than five-eighths of a child apiece. It was not a happy picture that they drew. We and our strain (to carry their idea farther than they carried it) should be extinct in a few generations, unless we found the means to mend our ways. And they didn't urge us to mend our ways; they didn't need to. It was war-time then, and nothing seemed so attractive to us as peace, marriage, maternity—in other words the normal woman's life. Intellectual ambitions, *per se,* were at a low ebb. What we really wanted was to be secure and happy.

That is what the mother to-day wants for her daughters. That is what the daughters themselves want, and many of them think they'll get it better by staying away from college and the supposed attendant risk of becoming old maids. For it is plain enough to any one to-day that most young men prefer girls who never went to college; the advantages of the college-trained woman are not apparent to them until they grow older. As a result of their youthful attitude, many girls are afraid to risk four years at making themselves less marriageable in payment for the undoubted gains but doubtful pleasures of a college education.

But are these fears justified? Do college graduates really show themselves to be less marriageable, less reproductive, attractive, popular or useful than girls who never matriculated? Or are they instead a normal lot, marrying successfully, if late, having children, and when they don't marry leading active and useful lives? What prospective college girls today want to know about women graduates can be reduced to three main questions: Do they marry? Do they have children? And if they don't marry, what becomes of them?

An examination of the post-graduate record of a typical class from a typical woman's college ought to provide answers to these questions.

The records kept since graduation of the Class of 1920 at Wellesley College are unusually complete, and offer material from which to

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obtain a cross-sectional view of what the post-war graduates have been doing. This class was not remarkable for records or achievements in college; it was not unusually bright or unusually stupid, nor did its members possess an undue proportion of beauty or ugliness, gaucherie or charm. It may have been as a whole a trifle more serious-minded than the classes that enter to-day, for it entered in wartime and presumably for the purpose of study; but it was by no means a class of grinds.

Since graduation the secretaries have gathered material for five successive reports on the doings of this class. They were intended for class consumption only, and published in 1923, 1925, 1927, 1928 and 1929.

Of 351 graduates, two were never heard from directly or indirectly. All of the others answered some or all of the questionnaires, or, in their absence or illness, had their families or friends answer for them. Often a single report covered long gaps in the past. A study of all five reports gives a general picture of what has been happening to each girl since her graduation. To be sure, each year there is a growing number of people who have drifted off and failed to report, there being 97 such girls not heard from in 1929. The record of the class is thus an under-statement, rather than an over-statement, of its activities.

Almost every one will agree that the normal activity of young women is marriage and child-raising. Let us therefore examine the class record and see what answer it makes to the first question which every prospective college entrant has in her mind: Does the college graduate marry?

According to the statistics of this class, 245 out of a total of 351 graduates are now married—69.8 per cent of the class. Tables of their marriage dates show that they did not marry as a rule immediately after graduation, though indeed a few of them did. But by the end of 1922 a third of the class was married. Remembering the traditional Class Supper, when the roll-call of those about to be graduated is read and each engaged student is required to get up and walk around the table, one cannot recall any such stampede as this third would have made, had they all gotten up and indicated their intentions. The few who knew they were soon to marry were probably not even the 6 per cent married during that very year of 1920. It didn't look like a marrying class, but it turned out to surpass in ten years the lifetime prophecy of the lecturers. And it is not done yet, as the following figures show:

MARRIAGES

YEAR	PER CENT OF CLASS MARRYING DURING YEAR	TOTAL PER CENT OF CLASS MARRIED TO DATE
1920	6.0	6.0
1921	10.5	16.5
1922	18.2	34.7
1923	8.8	43.5
1924	6.3	49.8
1925	6.6	56.4
1926	2.8	59.2
1927	5.7	64.9
1928	2.6	67.5
1929 (part year only)	2.3	69.8

Even during the year 1929, of which we have only a partial report, the marriages were still going on, 2.3 per cent of the entire class announcing marriages during that year.

It would be interesting to see how these marriage figures compare with those of a like group of non-college girls. Perhaps nearly 70 per cent marrying in ten years is a low average, but I doubt it. And surely no prospective college student is going to worry about her chance of matrimony, when she has a nearly 70 per cent chance of finding her husband inside of ten years, and every indication that ten years is not the set limit of her opportunity.

Turning to the second question: Does the college woman have children? the answers are equally encouraging. The reports show a total of 352 children born to the class, or one more than the number of graduates. That fractional child which seemed so disgraceful and pathetic in the lecturers' prophecy has here filled out considerably, to more than life size. The average is 1.0028 children per graduate, and nearly a child and a half—1.4376 children, to be exact—per married graduate. These figures show only ten years of accomplishment, and all the reports are not in.

Looking more closely at the record of all the married girls, we find that only 23.7 per cent of them are childless. This means that 53.3 per cent of the whole class are mothers already. When more than three-quarters of those who marry have children, it does not look as if college tended to unfit them for motherhood, or give them a distaste for it.

Nor did the mothers in the class seem anxious to delay their maternity. Their first children were born to 53.5 per cent of them during the year following marriage, and to 26.7 per cent during the second year of married life. After that the numbers fall off quickly, with only 9.6 per cent having first children during the third year, 4.3 during the fourth,

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2.7 during the fifth, 2.7 during the sixth, and only 0.5 during the seventh.

Their interest in children is even more plain when we discover that among all the mothers only 35.3 per cent have but one child, while 43.3 per cent have two children, 17.1 per cent have three, and 4.3 per cent have four children each.

And it looks as if the maternity of the class is by no means exhausted, for during 1928, the last year for which we have a whole-year report, there were more children born than at any other time. In 1924 there were nearly as many births, and the births were fairly evenly distributed throughout all the years excepting 1921 and 1922 when but few girls had been married long enough to have children, and 1929 where the record covers only a part of the year.

The complete table of births is as follows:

BIRTHS

YEAR OF BIRTH	NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN THAT YEAR	PERCENTAGE OF ALL CHILDREN
1921	11	3.1
1922	27	7.7
1923	49	13.9
1924	53	15.1
1925	39	11.1
1926	38	10.8
1927	52	14.8
1928	55	15.6
1929 (part year)	28	7.9

This does not look as if the births were falling off, but rather as if they were on the increase. The answer given by this class to the prospective entrant's second question is certainly reassuring.

Perhaps most important of all is the fact that among all the marriages reported by the class, there is no sign anywhere of even one divorce. If any exist they have been carefully hidden. It looks as if these marriages were successful, and from a perusal of the individual reports it appears that college training contributed materially to the success.

But what of the college graduates who don't marry? If one must be a childless old maid, what then?

Surely the next best thing is to be usefully and happily employed.

Of the 106 girls not known to be married, in the Class of 1920 at Wellesley, all but 5 have been working most of the time since their graduation. Two of the 5 are the unknowns about which nothing has been heard.* The other 3 report that they are idle. These 3 are less than 1 per cent of the entire class,—0.9 per cent exactly. The unknowns are 0.6 per cent. All but these small fractions of the class have a job or a household of their own.

One expects, and finds, that a large percentage of the unmarried girls have taken up teaching as a profession. There have been 56 teachers among the 101 workers—that is, 52.3 per cent of all unmarried graduates. Thirty out of the 56 have stuck to teaching and tried no other profession, while 26 have taught for a part of their ten years out of college, but have held other jobs as well. Of these 26, 17 left teaching for such jobs as business, probation work, tea-room management, acting—in fact for occupations that released them from scholastic routine. Six out of the 26 taught and did other work simultaneously; and it is notable that but 2 out of all the unmarried graduates left some other work to take up teaching. Teaching appears to be a stop-gap—an occupation always open, and considered to be better than nothing, but often a mere time-filler for those who are waiting to find something to do that they like better.

Here is the complete list of work of the unmarried:

WORK OF UNMARRIED GRADUATES

Teaching	56
Secretarial work	12
Social service work	10
Business (kind not specified)	9
Editorial work	7
Art and interior decoration	4
Medicine	4
Missionary and church work	4
Music	4
Nursing	4
Acting	3
Bacteriology	3
Banking	3
Club and civic work	3
Court and probation work	3
Law	3
Vocational and personnel work	3
Writing	3
Journalism	2
Advertising, Botanical research, Camp directing, Chemistry, Chicken raising, Engineering, Eye-training work, Farming, Politics, Merchandising, Study, Tea-shop management, Ventilation work	1 each

This is a total of 177 jobs, or 1.75 jobs per working girl. A few have done two kinds of work at the same time, such as banking and politics, or editorial work and writing; but on the whole the large number of jobs seems to

*Of the few known deceased, none died without having first worked or married, and their figures are therefore included in the statistics.

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arise from the tendency of all these unmarried people to work at what they can get, until they find an opening in what they want. Special study and training have occupied a fair proportion of the time of many working girls, though no special mention of study is made on the above list except in the single case where the study was general.

Some important people are hidden behind the simple listings of their jobs. Also, many married girls held jobs, both before and after their marriages. Although married workers do not figure in this report, their work was frequently of importance and distinction. It is probable that but few of the graduates in the class would have attained to positions of any prominence without their college training. In most cases the advanced schooling was the foundation and inspiration of the work.

Therefore, if the modern mother wants her daughter to stay at home until she goes away to ornament the home of a husband, she had better not send that daughter to college. For the figures show that the college graduate doesn't stay quietly at home for long. She is very likely to marry and have children—so likely, in fact, that she need rouse no fears in the mind of the prospective entrant. But if she does not marry she is not likely to waste her time in idleness. Surely the modern mother and her daughter will agree that college will be of great help in transforming any possible state of spinsterhood into an interesting and worth-while existence.

Good-by, Bohemia

By NANCY EVANS

Being in New York is rather a responsibility; Margaret, for example, always assumes that I move in an artistic, vaguely intellectual paradise. She refers to me as a free spirit and she has a mind's picture of me exotically gowned and surrounded by famous people (chiefly men). In this rare aura epigrams are commonplace and gallantry is unnecessary. I am supposed to be doing important work and it is a matter of course that I am making money. And so, despite my careful efforts to present an exact picture, a letter from Ohio addressed in Margaret's up-hill script makes me feel a hypocrite.

The latest letter was much like the others except for a new phrase that stopped me; Margaret spoke several times of the "demands of domesticity." The complaining tone was unmistakable and there was too much about artists and beauty and freedom. It was hopelessly naïve and I realized that Margaret was still living in our college world of 1923 when we spent long afternoons reading Harriet Monroe's "New Poetry," "Janet March," "Crome Yellow," and "The Triumph of the Egg." We believed quite blandly in sophistication and the arts. To be sure, Margaret found that she loved "funny, old-fashioned Tom" after all; she married and she had two sons, but she probably still thought she could write and she still had a secret desire for Bohemia. And now she was dramatizing herself and she was appealing to me as to one who would understand her frustration. I resolved to sit down and destroy her illusions about Greenwich Village, the ways of the artists, and freedom in general before they could do further damage.

Most of the writers and painters have fled New York anyway, and if they haven't, their lives are as regular as they are expensive, and as respectable as they are hard-working. Yes, certainly, bohemianism and defiance are outmoded. Perhaps they never were very satisfactory; Floyd Dell says that even in the old days, in 1913, when the Village was beginning to be a credo, various people he knew were secretly married though apparently living in sin. Such is social pressure! They had, of course, started without benefit of clergy, but after a time emotion got the upper hand and they wanted to insure themselves to each other. And now, just eighteen years later, the cult of bohemianism is dead, gone entirely, as an intellectual movement.

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II

My letter to Margaret was longer, but no less emphatic, than I expected; and writing it made me wonder what had caused the change I described. Freedom versus the home, the home versus freedom—was the change since 1913, since 1923 even, a retrogression? Was the return to convention the result of insufficient will? Or were the home and monogamy the true, deep desires that were inescapable? Or were they merely the best compromise to be found? These and other questions bothered me. Were people insured against their better judgment by biological compulsions? Or did they sensibly decide that promiscuity, however sincere, was rubbish? Was revolt characteristic of youth, and when people settled down were they merely older, not wiser? Did intelligence abandon false gods for true? Or did success enable people to be honest with themselves?

What of Edna St. Vincent Millay, the bright nymph who phrased a cliché which inspired a generation:

"My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—
It gives a lovely light!"*

Now she lives high in the Adirondacks and she is happier than her friends ever thought possible. To be sure, many of her admirers were irritated and felt betrayed when she, the prophet of the shining moment, fell in love and married.

There are eight hundred acres of upland soil, and there is an old farmhouse sprawling comfortably; the delight of Edna Millay and her husband is in adding here a sleeping-porch, and there another bathroom. In the winter there is but one way down from the farm—on snow-shoes. A studio workshop among the trees is the place where poetry is written, and the flower garden is a hard-won pride.

In the living-room Edna Millay sits, perhaps on the well-worn, slightly bumpy sofa, and dreams sonnets; or talks about the call to a deeper brotherhood of mankind. She is tan, so tan that even the skin, where her hair is parted, is brown. She says that the direct, open life of the farm makes her feel closer to her girlhood sea. And it is not odd when the rebel remarks: "I love to watch the clumsy farm people feeding our new-born calves. I even tried it myself; I dipped my fingers into the warm, skimmed milk and they licked it greedily away. The calves are so new and complete—even to their polished hoofs." But in the old days Edna St. Vincent Millay, with her little house on Bedford Street, was the bright, erratic star of the Village.

And from another farm in the Adirondacks Louis Untermeyer writes: "Last summer, by dint of the lightest possible labor—and a heavy application of fertilizer—I finished the season with a colossal crop of peas, potatoes, parsnips, petunias (yes, I know they're not edible, but they are the hardiest annual beginning with a "p"), parsley, pumpkins—and a little (more or less perennial) poetry."

There he lives with his wife, Jean Starr Untermeyer, and their son, Joseph, just past two. Only about 10 per cent of the one hundred and sixty acres is cultivated and the wilder 90 per cent is used for "maple-sugaring, deer-hunting, trout-fishing, day-dreaming, rabbit-breeding, and shaking the cedars in the hope of bringing down an inspiration on one's head." And one should mention the "two apple orchards (tame and wild), the dogs (including the Scandinavian neighbors'), the donkeys (expensively ornamental), the cows (wholly utilitarian), and the hired man, from whom I have gathered more genuine philosophy than I ever encountered between Fourteenth and Seventy-second Streets."

This, if you please, is the Louis Untermeyer who belonged to "The Masses" and, later, the "Liberator" group, whose meetings were held spasmodically in the Village and along Riverside Drive. And it is the Louis Untermeyer who, in a restaurant under the sidewalk in MacDougal Street, at least once a week, used to settle the future of American literature with Floyd Dell, another apostate who has gone to the country and a newer freedom.

III

Floyd Dell has lived on Mt. Airy near Croton-on-Hudson for about ten years, and his only reason for having left Manhattan is, "Who wouldn't if he could afford to?" It seems that even when he was a part of Greenwich Village he had a cottage in New Jersey to which he went as often as possible, despite the necessity for first a street-car, then a ferry, another street-car, and finally a walk of a mile.

There are other writers, an economist or two, and a well-known lawyer on Mt. Airy; among them are Max Eastman and Waldo Frank. The binding interest of the commu-

*From "A Few Figs from Thistles." Published by Harper & Bros. Copyright, 1922, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

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nity is its school—the Hessian Hills School, which was started by a group of families so that their children might have the most modern training. But the school is expensive, and Floyd Dell says it takes most of his time, and that of Mrs. Dell too, to earn the money for the education of their sons, Anthony and Christopher.

Though it may seem incongruous to find Floyd Dell the exponent of regularity and a sort of *paterfamilias,* it is not really so at all. True, he was the champion of freedom and individualism and the right to love independently, but he never was the champion of promiscuity—the thing most people meant when they spoke of Greenwich Village. He belonged to the group of able and serious young writers which came to New York in order to escape the emptiness of 1913 American morality. They did not come to New York to create a new immorality, as was immediately supposed; from the beginning their purpose was misunderstood and was, accordingly, very popular.

Indignation and interest started over free love and liberalism in general, and the once obscure artist found himself being publicized all over the country; even the smallest newspapers found feature material in his scandalous Village life. Floyd Dell's name became so widely identified with free love that when "The Briary Bush" was published he received innumerable letters of annoyance because he allowed his heroine to marry in the end.

The publicity about Greenwich Village came at a time when there was a general unrest, an expansive interest in new ideas. It started in 1913 and it gained momentum with the war; by 1918 Bohemia was an accepted phenomenon. Young people in Wisconsin and Massachusetts and Louisiana and Kentucky liked the free life (as advertised) and they resolved to become artists. Or at least to watch the artists live and to eat in the same restaurants.

IV

Before the Village became a movement it was possible to rent a floor in a fine, old brick house for twenty-five dollars a month. Since it was neither fashionable nor profitable to be a new voice, this was an important inducement to live below Fourteenth Street. But as soon as the inundation started, landlords became canny and tripled the rents; from being an intellectual revival the Village became a real-estate dealer's picnic. Those artists who could afford to remain became specimen and, in self-defense, they developed a technic of concealment. Floyd Dell told me his blood froze with wrath when he was pointed out to a group of sightseers in the *Pirate's Den* as a "typical villager"; that was his first and last visit to the show-place of Christopher Street.

Most of those who belonged to the old Village, in the days before 1913, claim that there never was a real Bohemia—wild life and all the rest; people did more or less as they pleased, but the thing they were chiefly interested in doing was work. John Sloan told of the change when he remarked: "At first there was a saloon on every corner, now there are ten speakeasies in every block." As a director of the Society of Independent Artists, which each year gives the vehement newcomers a chance to exhibit, John Sloan has an inside opportunity to watch the left-wing painters and sculptors. He knows their spirit and their habits, and he claims that even in 1913 the good ones hadn't much time to waste. As he says: "An artist must be a spectator. If he jumps on the stage he will curtail his energy; but if he is not mixed up with people and activities, the things he observes will burn more deeply."

A stern conservation of power and a jealous husbanding of resources seems to be characteristic of the creative. In a review of Carl Van Doren's "Swift," H. L. Mencken said of the world's great iconoclasts: "They spend too vast an energy shocking humanity to have any left for shocking the neighbors." This aptly expresses the anomaly of the poet and the painter and it is the thing people will not believe. High in a pent-house studio above Washington Square, John Sloan works tirelessly and remains unconcerned about the social demands of success; Eugene O'Neill finds "the perfect calm and privacy necessary for doing one's best work" in a French château; Robinson Jeffers only leaves his stone tower on the Point Lobos headlands "to go to town for a hair-cut or something like that." And Rockwell Kent, working nine and ten hours each day at his farm, says: "We never go visiting and we seldom entertain; a man can't be gregarious and get work done."

V

By the time Greenwich Village was accepted, merely living there had become an intellectual pose. But the young believed and they came to find fulfilment; only a few were talented enough to win against the heavy odds of overexcitement and intrusion. The others went back to their homes, or they remained

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and went in for sophistication. The ones that remained and compromised are department-store executives, greeting-card artists, copy-writers and stylists; and they may be seen nightly, prosperous and older, along Eighth Street.

The popularization of Bohemia was one result of a national rush for ready-made liberalism. In 1913 free love was sinister, by 1923 monogamy was shamefaced; and now in 1931 the circle is completed, marriage is respectable, and it is smart to be feminine—even in behavior!

The past eighteen years of experimentation have produced their results—some fortunate and others sad. The young of 1920 had the worst of it, and if they belonged to the smart set (either in New York or Newtonville), their lives were pretty well thrown away. They may have had lovers, they may have been married, but if they believed in freedom and the devil take the rest, they had ample opportunity to theorize themselves out of happiness. There are many women in New York who are prosperous and suave, but thirty and alone; very often they have a child or children whom they are supporting properly, and they confide that if they had known as much as they know now, their husbands would have had a chance to be faithful.

The young people of to-day, those who are just leaving college, have the benefit of the situation. They may choose their loyalties and be blameless. If they like the consequences, they may be modern à la 1920; or they may, if they are not afraid to risk believing, be modern à la 1931. Or they may choose the in-between despair that emerged about 1925 when the results of taking things apart were found to be less than might be desired. The ideas that became serious about this time were expressed only too well by Joseph Wood Krutch in his "The Modern Temper," published about four years later. Mr. Krutch offered very little hope for the reinstatement of the ancient nobility of mankind, but now we are beginning to see that he reckoned without the persuasion of the sun (or moon) and the inevitable tides of reaction.

On all hands people are searching for new values and restating the old ones. Man's conception of his universe and himself has changed; science is here to stay, but philosophy and metaphysics point their claims. This balancing of forces, a sort of revolt against defeat, does not mean that the battle for honesty is off, that it has been quietly lost. Nothing of the sort; it merely indicates that the roads are open and that a modicum of victory is lying around for the asking. Agnosticism does not make one a social pariah, and it is admitted that man is not always heroic. Main Street has accepted as much of the iconoclasm of H. L. Mencken as it needs, and in Montgomery, Ala., it declared a truce by electing him to the Rotary Club. The word sex is not a solecism and lip-stick is not the emblem of a fallen woman. It is considered rational to be interested in ideas, and an artist is not necessarily a libertine.

Greenwich Village did not quite eliminate the home, and romantic love is more firmly instated than ever before. It is expected that a girl will marry the man of her choice, and that she will be an intelligent human being both before and after. To be sure, many young women may have as much difficulty in getting back into the home on self-respecting terms as their sisters of a decade ago had in breaking away; but in any case, they may admit that they do not have everything they want without marriage and children.

The Show

By Angela Cypher

Whether you hate it,
Whether you love it,
Life, the showman,
Says, "What of it?"

You can weep
Or rage or pout,
You can stay in
Or you can get out.

The farce is raw,
The jokes are old,
But out of doors
It's dark . . . and cold.

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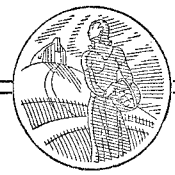

Guardian Angel

A COMPLETE SHORT NOVEL

By MARGERY LATIMER

"Guardian Angel" adds variety and distinction to the list of novels selected in the $5,000 Prize Contest. Twenty-year-old Vanessa, beautiful and popular, scorns the normal activities of a girl of her age and goes in for the higher life under the influence of Fleta Bain, an older woman, whom she considers everything that is pure and good. The dramatic clash of the real and the ideal brings out the characters of the two women with exacting clearness. Miss Latimer has realized a situation which has wide significance.

We were passing out of church, nodding and smiling largely from our false, too-kind Sunday faces. We were being moved along the aisle toward the back, our feet pushing in little steps forward with the crowd. We glanced down to see if we were about to scrape some one's heel and the aisle carpet—why, even as we looked at it, the very instant we stared, we couldn't recall the color. We were leaning forward from our shoulders so that our necks felt soft and full of sweet low murmuring—"How do you do? How is your mother?" And suddenly we smiled at the ceiling, over the heads of solid citizens in glazed white collars, their hands out shaking other hands, their fixed benevolent smiles the same for all. We had to push in our hips to get around the end pew and to turn into the long narrow aisle at the back. She jerked my arm. I felt her cold breath on my cheek as I turned. I looked suddenly into her face and I could feel her heart beating. "Aunt Grace, *that's* the room," she said.

The long wooden drop that shut off the Sunday-school parlors from the rest of the church had been raised and I peeked into the room. We had gone to that room as children but I never remembered seeing it as part of the church before. It looked so different. She simply hurled me toward it and I turned and apologized to Mrs. Gunsaulus, whom I had almost upset. "Do forgive me. . . ." She grasped my arm hard and then she let go and went into the centre of the lonely place. A ragged song-book, the edges softened into a kind of gray fluff, was lying on a frail varnished table. A small organ, with red velvet behind the ornate openwork design in the front, stood at the right near a flock of ugly clattering hard chairs. I had seen those things most of my life, but now, as part of the church, they all looked different from ever before, more exposed, more bleak and worn. The carpet was like that other carpet. I looked and all the time I was seeing it I couldn't recall the color. My niece put her hand on her forehead

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slowly and then dropped it, gazing straight ahead. She looked slender and childlike in her flowered silk with the hair hat pressed back in front and her startled, tender face all exposed and gleaming. She was like a little child who has lost her voice and swallows and swallows to regain it, twisting her handkerchief around her thumb.

"I thought this room was enormous," she brought out finally.

I felt her shocked breathing go through me. I always feel it when she is scared or disappointed or about to cry. "Oh, you couldn't have thought that, Vanessa," I said.

"But there must have been hundreds and hundreds here that night of the bazaar. I was only four but I remember the crowd. I was so frightened of everybody that I just wrapped Mama's skirt around me any time any one looked at me. All I can remember are huge moving black skirts, like tents, and the most I could see was a silver belt-buckle and sometimes I felt a hand come down on my head for a second. Then that door over there came open and the room seemed to be even larger and like a ballroom. The floor looked bright and slippery. I remember that," she said firmly.

We both glanced down at the carpet. "How extraordinary," I muttered.

"Yes, it was, Aunt Grace. She came in that door over there." She looked up at me. "Fleta did," she said softly and looked away.

If you had seen us there I couldn't have made you believe that this twenty-year-old girl and myself had ever sat under the grape arbor at my house laughing in the sunshine with our heads back on our shoulders and our hands lying free, palms up to the light. You couldn't have believed that this child could open those awed lips and send out a strange peal of laughter that made me join and started off old Mr. Bates in the vegetables and weeds to laughing, too, and waving at us through the corn. You couldn't believe that her sober face was ever shining with the most delicious open laughter that united every one in a second and made us all want to protect her and keep her happy. Oh, she would go rocking off down the garden path sometimes, her golden head among the flowers, and lean against the apple boughs just to laugh, her face turned toward the sky, her hands and body limp against the tree, open to sun and light. Sometimes at a picnic, with yellow leaves shaking down all around us, she would go into a perfect delirium of joy so that her brooding, self-absorbed face was transfigured and we would one by one join her with delicious laughter, laughing at nothing, absolutely nothing, as the yellow leaves fell. But she is an only child and subject to rages and resentments as well.

"You aren't listening to me, Aunt Grace," she said, twitching my sleeve. "Fleta came in that door. She had on a cream net dress over rose-colored satin and it had a long train. Little children were riding in the train . . ."

"Now, Vanessa," I said, "they couldn't . . ."

She looked resentful and insisted that they did. "They were swinging from the ruffles on her sleeves and hanging from her belt and shoulders. She moved slowly—like this—and she was looking straight ahead at some one and walking toward him, smiling and holding out her hand. I had always been frightened before. I had never made a move to leave Mama at any sort of party . . ."

"But you always laughed when you got home," I said.

"Oh, sure I did, but this time I was good and scared of every one and I broke away from Mama and walked across the room to her without any fear at all. Those little children were hanging to

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her like sleepy fat bees, but I pushed right through and took her hand. She looked down at me and I looked up." She stood very still, a look of serene awe around her head, her face lifted angelically as if again she were looking up, up, with rolled-back melting eyes. "Oh, that door opened all of a sudden and my life was changed."

She forgot about me. She stared at the door as if she were acting the scene and re-acting it, over and over, her hands even making little ghost gestures of surprise and then homage. And there in her neck and eyes was shining the weakness of her, the inability to make up her mind or grasp a situation, and in her parted lips I saw the dark struggling part of her, the solemn, never-resentful self-absorption.

"Why, even when I used to come here six years ago to Christian Endeavor it wasn't like this. I can't understand why it's changed so, got so much smaller. Why, it even looks mean."

"I think it's having it all thrown open. I brought the children one day in spring to a little recital and it looked much better than it does to-day."

"Oh, I'm so glad. Then it isn't just me, is it. You know I'd hate to think I just imagined things different from what they are. You know one does hate to think that."

"Yes, of course," I murmured.

She gave her pealing, unexpected laugh, as if she had seen through all her illusions and for a second was shining out above herself and her blindness, transformed into that golden all-laughing being, warm with sun and life. But I knew she was merely laughing because we were stepping out of the empty church door into the Sunday noontime of our village. That was always her greeting for the outdoors—her enchanting intimate laughter.

Across the street at the engine-house four men sat pressed into armchairs, arms folded on chests, feet crossed, pipes going. We could see the new fire-engine through the large open door and I remembered the days when four great black horses would plunge into the street, men hanging from the ladders on the side of the rattling engine, little boys running down the road behind. The minister's boy stepped along with his enlightened chin held high, his bland pink cheeks shining with cleanness and health. I am sure Vanessa did not see him when she answered his cordial, rather effeminate "Hallo." I am sure she saw only a vague face and suit passing outside her.

I know, for example, that at four years of age at the Presbyterian bazaar she hadn't seen Fleta Bain, whom all of us have known for years. I saw Fleta, too, that evening. I was about eighteen at the time. I remember her perfectly. Her dress did not have a train. Four meagre children with sleek thin hair walked beside her. Fleta herself was distraught and grief-stricken, her large eyes full of misery and pity for the race, because, I have since decided, she saw in each person her suffering self. I heard somewhere that she was wretched that night because of unrequited love and she had come home from the city to our village for peace and a quiet, painless life, leaving in the past all the chaos and violence of the other, the dark hurt of thwarted purposes and desires. She was heart-broken that night, almost too miserable to know where she was, and behind her walked her abominable old aunt, Clackie Weir, wearing one of her atrocious bonnets that she created out of plush and ribbons from candy boxes. Some said that Fleta had martyred herself for her old aunt, that she had no other relatives, and she felt the most remarkable and unselfish love for the creature. Others said they pitied Aunt Clackie because she had a lot to

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put up with from Fleta, who tried out all her lessons in spirituality and the higher life on her aunt.

"You know, Aunt Grace, I think I have to stop and tell Fleta about—just now," she said very low, looking ahead with that intent eager look.

"But it's so near lunch-time."

"Oh, Fleta doesn't think of *food!*"

"No?"

"Of course not. You know I met her February 20th, 1904, and then I got to know her awfully well on March 10th, 1927."

"Must we stop, dear?" I said. "You know I ought to get home to Wendall and the children. You go, and let me run along home."

"No," she said shyly. "No, I'll only stay a moment. I want her to understand how my life changed that night in 1904. You know, Aunt Grace, she is so . . ."

"Yes, I know," I said hastily.

Fleta always makes me feel as if she pitied me because I am a married woman and the mother of twins. She always reminds me of my struggles in Chicago when I went there to become a great singer. When I sit down in her house I am aware that I have failed. I see myself suddenly as I once dreamed I would be—singing with my head back, my voice entering all the people and rousing them so that they too would feel a singing in themselves, a mysterious response to my voice. Oh, perhaps I hate Fleta Bain. And perhaps I am deeply indifferent to her.

The door was standing open. Vanessa had rung. I prayed that old aunt was either in the cellar or the attic. She was so stingy she wouldn't accept an invitation out for a meal if she had food that might spoil. She would stay at home and eat it.

"Oh, Fleta!" cried Vanessa.

The big screen door opened and Fleta stood in the dark doorway. She was smiling her mysterious little smile. She wore an ordinary dress and it hung longer in back and was bunched and gathered around the waist abominably. I was sure that aunt of hers made her wear it for economy or perhaps she wore it as discipline in some of her spiritual studies. Vanessa had forgotten me. She was standing in the hall, one hand on her chest, the other clinched out in front of her.

"What darlings you are to come and see me!"

I peeked and Aunt Clackie was absent. "We can stay just a moment. Vanessa has something she wants to tell you."

Fleta turned to her with shining eyes, her lovely thin mouth opened, her long fingers with their bird-beaked nails working mysteriously as if she had some concealed tatting. She spoke gently, her voice low and deliberate, but there was something enchanting in the secret special thing she made out of Vanessa's merely wanting to tell her something. She made it all into something strange and lovely. Suddenly our being there together, waiting to hear words—just words—waiting to speak from our throats and hearts something inexpressible, made me see Fleta for an instant as Vanessa must always see her. She glanced at Vanessa and then as she looked at the girl's rapt, almost trancelike face and body, such a look of sadness and pity came on her face, such patience and deep, deep sorrow and understanding, that I had to like her.

"What is it, Vanessa?"

The girl took hold of the curtain and fitted the edge over her finger. She didn't know at that moment that Fleta was her whole life, that she needed and loved and wanted no one but that woman's face and soul there before her, that infinite understanding and tenderness making all the world so strange and splendid,

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and her whole being vital and angelic. She swallowed and smiled helplessly.

"How are your little children, Mrs. De Vries?"

Now the moment changed. The mention of children, the recalling of my married state, gave me that darting suspicion of Fleta. Something cold and hard entered the room. Her face was the same but I felt a coldness, like the cold that seeps out and slowly paralyzes. Above her head was a large framed painting of a madonna with a very fat bare child in her arms. Perhaps the aunt had hung it there. Below the picture, below the glorious mother-curves and breast and generosity sat Fleta, her sorrowing face and hurt eyes pointed straight at me.

"They are always well."

"Oh, how unusual. I thought children were always having things."

"Just little sicknesses," I said.

"Oh, don't let's talk about *children!*" cried Vanessa.

"No? Are we to talk about you, darling, instead?" She laughed enchantingly. "All right, let's talk about Vanessa. She is beautiful. She has something to tell us."

"I can't in front of Aunt Grace."

I really could have slapped her for that. Fleta made it seem not at all rude by taking us both to the window and showing us a bird's nest in the crotch of the big tree near the window. Again I felt some unutterable sorrow in her. I must have shown it in my eyes, my voice, the way I put out my hand to protect her and show her that I understood, because she was cold again. I saw that she pitied *me.*

"Good heavens, when women say they are perfectly satisfied in giving up their careers I always wonder if they are being really honest. What about you, Mrs. De Vries?"

"I feel as if my singing helped to make my children. They wouldn't be as lovely——"

"Now, Aunt Grace, you know they are perfect wretches. Why, that little Byron actually tottered over to me carrying the encyclopædia and crowned me with it yesterday. If you put out your hands to pet them they grab your finger and bite you. My word, lovely, if that's what you call lovely, if that kind of atrocious animalism is——"

Fleta laughed heartily. "I'm sure I could never wipe a child's nose," she said.

I was furious. I looked at the door. I closed my lips and counted to twenty. Before I could suggest going, Fleta had again pressed my arm with a sudden change of feeling. I saw a kind of deep regret on her face again and all her spirit seemed to warm me gently, as if in her heart she longed only to make people glow and be rich in their qualities. Now she looked much younger than her age. Fleta was fifty-one. But when the coldness comes she looks ageless—ninety, one hundred and fifty, even. She said to Vanessa, "Dear, come and tell us now. We must know *now.*"

All of Vanessa's smartness had gone. She couldn't speak of her experience in the church in an ordinary tone of voice. She couldn't say anything about it in front of me. I was outside. I didn't understand. I wiped the noses of children and the chins of children all smothered in cream of wheat. "Vanessa," I said, "I'm running along now."

"Oh, just a moment, Aunt Grace."

I went to the doorway. "No, I've stayed too long. No, really, Fleta."

"Wait outside," Vanessa whispered. "Please."

I waited outside the screen. I looked at the bridal-wreath that made a snowy bank all around the cottage. I remembered Aunt Clackie in her monstrous sunbonnet with the long gingham cape

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in back and the starched strings poking in the nasturtiums around the elm. I remembered her sharp voice that was always out of patience. "My soul and body!" or "Good *lands!*"—always said with more disgust than I could ever summon. She was thin and old but she had always taken supreme care of herself, never eating anything that might shorten her life, doing anything that would endanger her health, or putting any sort of strain on herself. No one in Lodi had ever liked her. All of us, with the exception of a very few, pitied poor Fleta, and some said it was a great mercy Fleta could take up New Thought and Yogi breathing when she had to live with Clackie Weir.

I thought, when I saw the pansies in a tiny decaying box, of Fleta's career, of her bowls of flowers on magazine covers, her graceful little garden scenes in color, always faint and yet real enough to pass. I wondered if you had to choose between those flat pointless little pots of daisies and sprays of fern and large beautiful flesh children that grow in you and break out of you into the world to sing and be wonderful. I knew that Vanessa would always be a Bodley in her strong body, that she was physically the child of Belle and Edwin, but in that other part, the part that shines through the body, she was Fleta's child. I wondered then if a time would ever come when she would break out of Fleta to come to life in the world of flesh and blood and truth.

"Like blueberries," said Fleta at the door. "That delicious taste. There's nothing quite like it, is there."

Vanessa stood awkwardly. She moistened her lip as if some forgotten taste of blueberries might still be there, hidden in the skin. "Oh, I don't know what you mean. I don't remember."

"You've eaten blueberries and you don't remember? Good heavens, Vanessa! They are like nothing else on earth."

All the blood rushed into the girl's face as if she had been struck on the cheek or across her startled eyes. "Oh, you aren't angry with me, are you?" she cried. "Don't hate me!"

"But, my darling child, why should I hate any one. I don't get mad. I don't know what that is."

"Then you don't hate me for not knowing blueberries?" she said softly.

"Well, for land's sake quit lettin' in all the flies in the country!"

It was Aunt Clackie Weir. I said goodby in a hurry. Vanessa stood there stubbornly while Fleta closed the screen door. I saw that Fleta's face was white and trembling. She moistened her lip, stiffened, and then relaxed and said with pitiful gaiety, "I haven't let in *quite* all the flies, Auntie."

Vanessa mumbled in a wretched awkward way. "Let's talk about time and space again. I read that book you gave me. I think he's wonderful but I don't understand that about immortality very well. I wish I could——"

I heard a crackle and whistling of silk. I saw an old white face full of fury and disgust shove Fleta away from the door and turn on Vanessa. "It's time decent folks was seeing about their victuals," she shouted and slammed the inner door so that we heard the key fall out of the lock. As Vanessa staggered away she saw Fleta behind the living-room curtain, waving her hand and trying to smile gaily.

"Oh, that wretched, ugly woman. Oh, sometimes I think I could actually—yes, I mean it, actually kill her." She was trembling so that she could hardly speak. She pulled off her hat and let the wind blow her bright hair, shoving it back and back from her smooth forehead and her ears. "How did she dare mention food when we were talking about immortality?"

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"She's an old lady," I reminded her.

"Well, then she ought to know better."

"We ought to know better than to call at lunch-time."

"Nonsense! Fleta doesn't care about food. She would rather find out about immortality first. She would be satisfied to fast for weeks and communicate with the masters on the other side——"

"But, dear, that's Miss Weir's house, remember."

"Well, she needn't think *she's* going to be immortal. I should say not. Only the most sensitized, the most highly spiritualized will be saved and kept from the wheel of experience, from Karma."

"How do you do, Mr. Bope?" I said.

He lifted his hat. He had soft white hair and he always wore good clothes. He was the president of the Co-operative Gas Works and a widower with two daughters, Julia and Jane. His name was Pliny Bope and he was our richest citizen. They always said he had the first dollar he earned but he kept up his house very well and the lawn was always lovely, the best in town. Grass was about the only thing that grew on his place, the flowers usually died. There was too much shade. Vanessa's father, my brother, Edwin, was one of the stockholders in the company. Edwin usually made bad investments, but when he made this one and put in everything, we patted him on the back because anything Pliny Bope was connected with made money and made a lot of it. Any firm that he was with wasn't going to lose, no matter what the conditions were, because money was a matter of life and death to him, and he would give his leg or his lungs before he lost even a part of his fortune.

Vanessa said finally, "Fleta is investigating Mr. Bope. She says he's responsible for a lot of the suffering here in town on account of the low wages he pays. She's checking up on Mr. Bope," she said threateningly. "Mr. Bope in particular and I'm going to speak to Papa. Perhaps he could do something toward helping humanity. Say, where could I get some blueberries? I had them once but I can't remember how they tasted." She flushed when she admitted that. "As I remember them—well, I just *see* them, that's all."

"That's all there is to them," I said.

"Perhaps for *you,*" she replied gravely.

"Don't be an idiot," I said.

"Now, Aunt Grace, I don't think it's very nice of you," she began. But I saw she was far away from me. I could have called her anything. She was unaware of me. She had withdrawn into her personal mist, into her real world, where she stood alone with Fleta, being slowly transformed into something as nearly like the woman as possible. It wasn't merely an intellectual domination. Vanessa drank the woman in through her pores when she was near her, she drank in her being on those days when she rushed to her house, her arms filled with Persian lilacs, her face uplifted, worshipping, like an angel adoring, and then pressed the cool moist flower clusters into Fleta's brown exquisite arms.

"Fleta's birthday is on Thursday. She's invited me to come over. There's going to be a children's party. When I told her about that night in the church she said right off, 'Let's *ask* some children on my birthday and we'll have a beautiful time with them.' "

I told Vanessa that would be awfully nice and instantly she said: "But we aren't going to have Byron and Myrna. They're too young and I don't know what Fleta would do if they acted natural and started biting people's hands."

"My dear," I said, "my children don't bite, and if they did bite I think it would be very disloyal of you to tell about it, and I consider these stories you tell not

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disloyalties but downright lies to pamper Fleta's defeated maternalism." But she hadn't heard me apparently. I heard her murmur something about blueberries and the next day I found her at the table, all alone, a bowl of blueberries and cream in front of her. She ate slowly, tasting the mild vapid fruit to the full, one hand supporting her bright cheek.

"Well?"

"Well yourself."

"How do you like them?"

"What?" she asked.

"Blueberries."

"I—I haven't decided yet. I—I think—I wonder if these are the way they are meant to be——"

"I'm sure they are." She looked so perplexed and sad and startled over it. I ought not to have gone on but I did. I couldn't hold back. I said: "That vapid washed-out fruit always makes me think of all the meagre frightened things on earth, those precious, rare, tasteless, pointless, flat, *tasteless*——"

"I'm going to take her a box for her birthday. I think she would like that."

"Yes, that would be called a pretty attention," I said.

"I'm making her a birthday cake, too, but don't you dare tell any one. It's the first I've ever made of this kind—Tropicana cake. One layer chocolate, the next orange, and the top lemon."

"Good heavens!" I cried. "Whose recipe?"

"I found it in a magazine called *The Pathway*. I'm going to make white frosting. Had I better cook it?"

"You'd better let me help you with the whole thing," I said.

"No. This is Fleta's cake. Everything I make for her is my own. Everything I do for her is all from me, earned by me, and I shall always be that way forever." She took another listless spoonful of fruit, the milk dribbling down, and chewed. "I kind of like these, Aunt Grace," she said. "They grow on one. I really didn't like them at first. They didn't taste like anything. But now I understand about them. I can't name how they taste but I like it. They are something one must learn to like, though, like beets."

II

The next day Vanessa came early. She had the box of blueberries all wrapped in fancy paper napkins and in her other arm she was carrying a large platter edged with fresh rambler roses. In the centre was her birthday cake, the one she made for Fleta, her Tropicana cake or whatever she called it. The icing was soft and oozing, it bulged in places and looked too thick and sweet. But the effect was lovely if you didn't contemplate eating the mess, the pink rambler roses with the soft shiny leaves and then the mound of soft pure white in the centre.

"Vanessa, dear, it is awfully pretty," I said. "The whole effect is lovely."

She was flushed and haughty. "I think it looks terrible." She had even cried over the cake. I could tell. She saw how miserably unappetizing it looked. "I burned my hand and I almost begged you to come and make me another but this is Fleta's and she will understand," she said proudly. I saw that she was waiting to be purged and overjoyed by Fleta's inspired vision of the platter, that she was contemplating a triumph. I knew that when Fleta's sad eyes looked at it, when she spoke in her tender special way about it, that Vanessa would be uplifted. I knew that Vanessa was waiting for that now. She was telling herself too that her ideal of a cake for Fleta was so perfect that of course anything she made would look mussy and sad.

"Come on, Myrna," she said patiently. "You can carry the berries if you'll be careful. Here." She laid them in Myrna's

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outstretched eager hands. "Now walk gently, Myrna! Those are for Fleta."

The children each had a gift for Fleta. Byron had made her a picture of a tiger in a cage. It was colored with his crayons, and really he has talent. The tiger simply roars out of the picture at you and his stripes are the most like real tiger stripes I have ever seen. Myrna made a princess on a large white paper. The lady wafts along in her white robes, and her feet look as if they are artificial, but her face is as cool and remote as the face of a princess. I am carrying a large armful of summer flowers and I have on my green voile with the hand embroidery.

"Now you and Byron are going to behave, aren't you?" asked Vanessa sternly.

"Oh, *yes!*" they cried at once.

Byron simply jerked at my hand to be up in front with Myrna and Vanessa but he was too small to walk alone. At the door Vanessa said to me, "How can I see Fleta alone?"

"We'll arrange that," I promised. I prayed that she had disposed of that hideous old aunt.

Fleta threw open the door. She was in lilac muslin. Her hair was done in intricate waves and little loose waterfalls, all shining under a net. Her face had that special light in it and two little children were reaching up at her from the side, waving colored beads and boxes.

"Look what I gave her!" said Joan Davis. She pushed a red box with a picture of a mouse on it under my hand. "Look!" she insisted. "Come on and see the other presents, Mrs. De Vries." She clutched my hand, dragging her whole body back on it, her weight in her heels.

Fleta laughed. "I'm so happy to-day," she said. "Oh, *Vanessa!*" But Byron pushed up between them and thrust his picture of a tiger into her hand. "Here," he said gruffly, and showed his teeth and gums, twitching up his nose and making a horrible deep noise in his throat.

"That means tiger," I said.

Fleta clapped her hands over the picture, her face soft with delight and surprise. "No, this *is* the tiger."

Byron simply jumped up and down.

"What did *you* bring her?" said Joan Davis to Myrna. "Let's see it."

Myrna shyly unrolled her princess.

"I brought you a store present, didn't I, Miss Fleta?" said Joan. "Yes, I did. It cost ten cents. I bought it all myself. My present is the best here. See that mousie?" She bent down on the floor to show Myrna. They both bent over the box, their loose dresses falling softly as they pouched there like birds.

I herded them and drove them before me into the living-room. They ran at once to the open window and pointed out the robin on her nest.

"Ssssssh," I said. "She's keeping her eggs warm so the babies can come out."

They stood with parted lips, hands closed and half raised before them, little shy smiles on their faces. Sally Maggs put her lips against the screen and made a warm cooing sound in her throat.

"I wish we could get the babies out."

"Could you be borned from a boy-bird, Mrs. De Vries?"

"Our goat's going to. It's going to come right out of him."

"How nice," I said, "and may we all come and see it?"

"To-morrow? To-morrow?" cried Byron. "Mama, to-morrow? Can we go to-morrow?"

"Some time," I said.

"We was all little tiny babies too once."

"Mrs. De Vries was a little tiny baby too."

They put their elbows on my knees, leaning forward, straining to get their faces closer to my face. I just sat there making those warm indistinct sounds in my throat at them. I loved them so much that I couldn't bear it.

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"My Daddy was a little tiny baby once. He said so."

"When's the party going to be?" some one cried.

They all slipped out of their mysterious sleepiness and one rushed to the door. "Miss Fleta, when's the party going to be?"

"Sssssh," I said. "Come here and tell me a big story."

Fleta came slowly, her little face cold and set, one bird-beaked hand on her cheek. She turned to Vanessa and said, "This is something important. I want you to promise."

"But why?" murmured Vanessa. She too looked cold and different. Her orange frock was brilliant in the dark room. Suddenly she turned to me as if we were alone and said, "Aunt Grace, Fleta wants me to promise never to make another cake."

"It can't be that bad, Fleta," I said. "Let's taste it."

Fleta smiled politely.

"Fleta," I repeated, "let's taste it. Let's start the party."

"Yes, yes, Miss Fleta," cried the children, stretching up their arms.

She looked distraught and bleak, cold gray like stone. Her lip was raised and she gave little laughs and yet she seemed to see none of us. Finally she said, "There are plenty of people in the world who can make cakes. But there are very few who can do what Vanessa was born to do."

"Can you be borned from a boy-bird, Miss Fleta? Can you? Can you?"

She put her hand down absent-mindedly and stroked his head.

"I want to do what others do and what I can do, too," said Vanessa.

Fleta just smiled and turned her back to Vanessa. She went to the window. "Did you see the nest, children?" she asked.

I saw the sad cake on the hall table. Its sides had bulged out from the heavy frosting and there was a great oozing rent at the bottom. The rambler roses on one side were just beginning to turn ghastly, as the white slowly gained on them, covering their color and freshness. "After this, Vanessa," I said, "don't expect to find good recipes in magazines called *The Pathway.*" Just then Tom Chettle opened the screen.

"Hello!" He said it like an explosion, his cheeks fiery and full of wind. He gasped and smoothed his hair down before he went to Fleta and held out a package that once was white.

"Oh, thank you, Tom. How sweet of you to remember."

He had to turn away as she untied the string. It was candy in a red box with a gorgeous lady looking out of a rose. I am sure he selected it because she looked like Fleta to him. Vanessa moved away in scorn and stood so that her back looked rigid. I knew she was protesting and that she knew just how her back looked to all of us, turned coldly and squarely against our foolishness.

"Come," said Fleta to the children, "the party is going to start."

III

The wood is charming when you get to it. You first have to climb over an old stile, and then follow a levee which has a tarn on one side and a cow pasture on the other. I always call the dark side toward the river, with those bleak strange trees and the pools of scummy green, a tarn. You can see the highway and the Caledonia hills if you look across the smooth pasture with the deep green places where the cow hoofs have sunk. We got over the stile very well, Fleta leading as if she were exploring a new land, her enchanted eyes moving from the tarn to the silent green pasture and the blue hills in the far distance. I

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was at the very end, half carrying my little Byron because he isn't used to walking in the country. Suddenly I heard Fleta call back in her clear even voice, "What are we to do to-day, children?"

Sally Maggs simply screamed, curls shaking, "We're to protect the trees!"

"Yes, but what else?"

"We're to clear the path for those who are to come," said Tom Chettle gruffly. He jerked down his blue sweater and dropped his head. Then he jumped high in the air and laughed idiotically, showing all his teeth at one of the little girls just behind. He began walking crazily to cover his embarrassment but the little children gravely started to pick up all the branches and leaves and twigs on the path. Ahead Fleta had stooped with her lovely secret grace, to airily pick one twig as an example. Then she walked on, her face toward the blue of the distant hills, and behind her the children came, picking furiously, trying now to outpick each other, panting, damp, and just ahead of me Vanessa, picking not only twigs but roots, stones, bits of glass, tinfoil, apple cores wilted and brown, and tossing them all gently into the deep soft meadow grass at the side of the path.

We sat down in the farther end of the pasture with the large tree behind us, making it shady and silent, a mound of yellow sand just ahead with a shallow pool left from the high water. I shall always remember those bodies of little children fluttering around her. They put up their warm arms to her, their bright faces swept hers as they peered into her splendid eyes, they thrust up their faces now and then with quick laughter. We sat around Fleta in a semicircle, her honey-colored hat, all lacy and twisted like a nest or a hive, on the grass beside her.

"Please sing something, Mrs. De Vries," said Fleta sadly. She sat turned away from Vanessa and I thought she was deliberately avoiding any reference to her.

"When's the party going to be?" said Byron gravely.

"Why, darling," said Fleta, "I had forgotten. The party's going to be *now,*" she announced.

"Could I do something?" asked Vanessa, coming around and looking humbly at Fleta.

"Nothing at all, thank you," said Fleta. She did not look up. "Tom, let me have that basket, please."

He handed it to her simply shaking with delight and embarrassment. "Can I get water, Miss Fleta?" he asked. "Or——"

"No, we aren't going to have coffee or lemonade," she replied.

She leaned over the basket and drew out little packages wrapped in gay paper napkins. These she handed to the children.

"No, no, don't peek," I said.

Then she gave each child an apple and an orange and sat up suddenly coy and smiling. We unrolled our packages and saw in the centre of each paper a dented, rather sodden sandwich filled with hard cheese. The soft bread had been torn in the cutting and great clots of butter stood out on top. "How lovely," I said quickly. "Look, Byron, see the big bite I'm going to take!"

"I don't want mine," he said.

Now Fleta broke off a tiny morsel and as she chewed held her fingers over her mouth. She looked around her, her eyes softened and vague as if she were eating something indescribably delicious, the other hand spread open beside her on the grass. Vanessa with great hungry lips and eyes watched every movement but she did not imitate Fleta. She sat as she always sits in the country, breathing in the sun and air with her body. Tom Chettle bit off pieces of his sandwich

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sharply with his head lowered. Suddenly he jumped up and fired his paper napkin, rolled into a moist wad, across into the trees.

"We aren't supposed to do that, are we, Miss Fleta? Are we? You said we shouldn't ever throw paper at the trees."

Fleta was holding up a little empty cracker box, the decorated kind that animal crackers come in. It was empty but she had saved it because of the animals painted on it and the whole thing was a circus cage. She held it up and said, "Shall we play with this?"

They looked embarrassed and ashamed, as if their lady was a bit foolish but they didn't want to let her know they knew. Some of them turned their heads away. I saw Vanessa spring up and cry at them, "Don't you even know how to *play?"*

"Well, Byron can draw better than that," said Myrna in a shrill voice. "He drawed a tiger that's better than that." The children turned to her and looked, their mouths very cross and impudent. "Byron can draw anything but his are all different. He can't make two of anything. But I can make as many as you want." She began pulling grass and heaping it in front of her.

"Yes, Byron *can* make a real tiger."

"Not really real," said Sally Maggs suddenly.

"Yes, Sally."

"No, our Lord Jesus makes the real tigers."

At the mention of God the children sat shyly with mouths slightly open, damp curls falling in their eyes, their fingers stuffed in their mouths. Lockets gleamed on dotted swiss and there were grass stains on white socks. Tom Chettle had bent his head again, his cheeks fiery, his knuckles white on his raised knees. Vanessa watched Fleta, her whole face very sad and humble, but the woman never once raised her eyes to the girl.

"Yes, God makes the real tigers, Sally," said Fleta. "Let's try to do something nice for God every day. Each one of us—every day."

Sally pitched over backward in embarrassment, covering her whole face with her little hands. She lay there on her fat side, peeking out at Fleta. The older ones were flushed and uneasy. They stared ahead or turned to giggle self-consciously behind their hands as Fleta looked above, gentle fixity in her raised head and sad, disappointed eyes.

The meadow cows, the young calves, and the baby bull stopped grazing and came closer, came slowly over the grass with their soft eyes fixed on Fleta, their hoofs heedlessly raised over the heads of daisies and mist flowers, a foam like egg white stained with green dropping from their grinding jaws. They came gradually and when Fleta lifted her eyes again, saying softly, "God lives in everything. He is in all," she saw out of the corner of her eye the cows slowly advancing, steadily, without noise, almost without motion. She knocked her bird-beaked fingers against her chest nervously. Her lip raised over her small grayed teeth. Her body jerked back and she stared at them for a second as if fire were coming from their nostrils, as if their sad, melting eyes were rolling and insane. She saw them with derelict teeth dripping black foam and iron hoofs that could tear off a scalp in an instant.

She jumped up and put both bird-beaked thumbs into her mouth, one eye following the friendly startled cows, the other calculating the distance to Barden's farmhouse. "That place over there is nicer," she brought out coldly. "Come, children, let's play we're pilgrims crossing the valley of terrors unaided."

She led the way rapidly, the children plunging after as if it were a game, the disappointed cows standing motionless. Tom Chettle pushed the little girls aside

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to catch up with Fleta, he even pushed Vanessa to reach her. They all cried out in resentment as he passed them, his elbows out. He ran on to Fleta, who was far ahead, a bright gold star for good attendance in Sunday-school shining on his blue sweater. I saw him slip it on while Fleta was talking about God. Mud was hanging in fangs from her high heels, her eyes were small with terror. Tom drew up beside her. He stretched up, filling his loose clothes like a man, shielding her from even a bird's-eye view of the meadow cows. Then he took long hops, his arms held out as a screen, his boots squeaking deep in the grassy mud.

Suddenly I saw her look full at him, her small mouth drawn down in iron resentment and her eyes glossy with scorn. He mumbled, "I'll take care of you—" and she replied, "Indeed, you needn't," and helped herself over the stile. He fell back, gulping down a great blubber in his throat. Then he passed us on the path where he had hopped so fantastically, head down, hands deep in pockets.

"Good *for* you," one of the little girls was brave enough to cry and some others repeated it. One child advanced and gave him a push with both hands, but he only jerked his cap down over his eyes and disappeared in the gloom of trees and bracken.

"Now, we're going to play a guessing game," said Fleta, her arms opened to us, her head turned toward the spot of soft green under forest trees.

"I guess you was afraid of those cows, Miss Fleta," said Sally Maggs.

"Come, come," said Fleta gaily, "find your places. Each one has a guess."

"You was afraid, wasn't you, Miss Fleta," she repeated, in a high excited voice.

"Here's your place, Sally. We're ready to begin." Fleta suddenly waved her arms as if little bells were ringing on them. She hummed and even danced under the spreading tree. "Guess—guess ——"

Sally stood by herself, her lips drawn down, and began to cry with uncovered face. When Fleta finally came toward her she turned away forlornly, covering her face with her hands, and when the woman knelt and put her arms around her she suddenly turned with a long deep cry and threw herself against Fleta, clung with her white hands and warm arms, crying, her back rising with sharp sobs—"You was afraid of the cows —" She screamed wildly now, her whole body wrenched and moving. "You was —you was——"

Fleta picked at the hands clasped on her neck. She tried to lift the arms, the head. Then she said sharply, "Come, Sally, we're waiting for you."

"You was too, Miss Fleta!"

"Children," said Fleta and they all turned to her. I turned, too. "Listen, children, I want to explain something." They shivered at her tone. The river lay behind us, glassy, cold, moving toward another larger river, showing the brown sand under the amber ripples near the edge. The children looked down restlessly and then they glared at little Sally who pulled away and stood in guilt beside her lady, dirt streams running down her swollen face, her hands at her sides, her head bent.

"Aaaaaaaah, shame, shame," said some one.

"Aaaaaaaaaaah."

"I am not afraid of cows," said Fleta. "If you must know why I came here," she added sadly, her eyes tinged with lovely soft reproach, "it was because this is cool and right for our game. Isn't it?"

"Yes! Yes!" they all cried.

One little girl jumped up and faced the shamed Sally who was sniffling and gasping with drooped head. "I'm going

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to slap—yes, sir, I am, you're a naughty nasty girl."

"Hush," said Fleta. She got down in the grass before them and knelt, holding their hands in hers, bending toward their quiet startled faces. "Let's forgive her. Let's kiss our Sally. Come, children, let's kiss our Sally. She's sorry and so are we. We're sorrier because she thought so badly of us—we're sorry for *her*. But it's all over now."

The children stood where they were. No one made a move forward. It was very still. Fleta rose. She closed her eyes and the light poured down through the green leaves.

"Let's promise to always be honest," she said. "Let's all of us make ourselves be sincere and honest and brave. That's the way we pay for the privilege of living—by being honest and open in return." She dropped her hands to her sides, looking ahead through the dark trees that grew down to the river. Then she said, "There is so little we can do on earth, there is such a very, very little possible for us to do—people will let us give them so little, they will take so little, that the one big thing left for us is honesty. Money honesty. Justice. Truth—even in the smallest things." She put one hand over her mouth for a second and then she looked at Vanessa. "If we want the new world to come in place of this dishonest, vulgar, cheap one then we must work and be honest in everything—that is the first requirement, the foundation of *everything*."

Oh, as she spoke I wanted to sing. I felt the way I used to feel about audiences. Only now I was the audience and Fleta was doing to me what I always longed to do to them. She was making me want to throw out my arms and look at every face and pour out a tremendous song. And even the little ones felt something because they took long frightened breaths, moistening their lips soberly, and then looked down and kicked the sod. Vanessa simply sprang toward Fleta. She closed her lips tightly and yet we heard a groan that seemed to come from the soles of her feet and rise in torment through her whole body. She threw herself down on the ground before the woman and put her face against the bottom of Fleta's skirt.

IV

She walked in as if there was no feeling anywhere in her body.

"Vanessa!" I said.

She looked at the carpet.

"Vanessa!"

Her eyes were dull, her whole body looked as if it had been cast out of some warm permanent place onto rocks. Her face had the vague set look of some one paralyzed by a fall. She stiffened her arms in front of her and pushed them hard between her knees. Then she lowered her head.

"Is your father all right?"

She nodded. I felt relieved. I am always expecting something to happen to Edwin. And I thought how just like life it was for me to have been sitting there thinking up something new to eat and to suddenly hear that my brother had broken his leg or lost the little money he had left. And before Vanessa came in I was imagining an entirely different existence for myself—I even saw myself husbandless and childless and me climbing a cocoanut tree in a palm-leaf skirt. When you think things like that something always happens to make you grateful for just the plain daily reality.

"How's your mother, Vanessa?"

She nodded.

"Did you stay and talk with Fleta?"

She stood up and began walking up and down in front of me, pushing her hair up from her forehead and setting her teeth down on her lip.

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"Just tell me what you think of this, Aunt Grace. I signed up—concert—one night at the dormitory and then we decided to go walking instead—Robert and me. And four times I answered present in gym class so Margot wouldn't need to appear and I told Miss Evans at the hall that Minnie Huggett had gone to see a doctor but really she went to the Orph matinée. Do you think that's so terrible?"

"Let me think," I said.

"Oh, what's there to think over? Every one does it. It's nothing. We don't give it a thought."

"Well, I don't think it's awfully honest," I said.

"Do you think it shows that I'm vile? Oh, Fleta said—" She clapped her hand over her mouth and turned away for a second. Then she swallowed and pressed her lips together, gazing at her shoe. "She said that for a person of my development not to realize that I was lying was worse than for some one else to lie and know it. Oh, she said that her life would mean nothing—nothing— Oh, does it all mean that I have something rotten in me? Am I really dead like those other people on this planet that lie and steal and don't have anything in them to say what is right and what is wrong? Will I go on and on and not be able to stop and does it mean that—Oh, she thought I had a divine voice in me that would speak——"

"Now, Vanessa," I said, "I think it all means that you're getting awfully careless but if you feel sad about it——"

"But I don't!" she cried suddenly. "I don't. Get that into your head now. I don't and I never, never shall. I don't see anything wrong in it. I think I was being generous to do it for them and no one can make me feel that I'm vile for having done it."

"But it was certainly not honest, Vanessa," I protested. "It wasn't horrible but it wasn't honest."

"And I don't care. I want to be dishonest. I want to lie and steal and kill and do everything bad because I am bad and I don't care, I'm glad I am, I'm glad of it and I'll never speak to Fleta again. I will never look at her again in my whole life. If she telephones me I won't go to the phone. If she sends me flowers and begs my pardon I won't acknowledge it. She is—dead—dead—" she repeated and threw herself down in the chair, her hands gripped over her eyes.

"Don't do that, darling," I said. "Every one tells lies but just don't tell any more. Be reasonable about it. Fleta didn't mean to hurt you."

"She did."

"I know she didn't. She's alive. I felt it this afternoon. She wants to put something good into the world that will make us grow and worship more and be happy and know what we're doing and getting. I really loved Fleta to-day when she spoke."

"*You* don't know her!" she cried, sitting up.

"What do you mean?"

"Every one talks about knowing Fleta. No one does. Oh, that's why it's so terrible—I know her—I understand—and no one else can—they *can't*——"

"Perhaps."

"Oh, she said that I was hardened in a way she would never have suspected. She said I could commit a crime and have nothing in me to speak the truth and make me know what I had done. She said her life meant nothing—nothing— Oh, does it all mean I'm not fit to help her make humanity—better," she cried and covered her face. "Oh, Aunt Grace, what shall I *do?*"

"Just don't tell any more lies," I said.

"Oh, I don't mean *that.*"

"What do you mean?"

(Continued on page 673)

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Art

By BENEDICT THIELEN

MRS. CAMBELL walked with a firm and resolute stride a few paces ahead of Laurence and her daughter. Her flat-heeled, rubber-soled shoes beat a dull but steady rhythm on the floor, while her substantially constructed body in its dark-green knitted suit seemed quite tense in concentration on the work at hand. She moved rapidly, stopping from time to time to look, with an earnest frown on her face, at one of the pictures which hung on the walls. Occasionally she would make a check mark with the small gold pencil which hung from a ribbon around her neck, in the red-covered guide-book which she carried in her left hand. Her progress through each successive room of the gallery was rapid, efficient, smooth.

Her husband, cap in hand, followed at a few paces behind her, gazing around in a slightly bewildered manner, but ready at a moment's notice to give all of his attention to whatever picture she might see fit to recommend for more detailed study. Although himself of a more practical turn of mind, Mr. Cambell nevertheless had a great deal of respect for his wife's knowledge of art, which he knew to be profound and thorough. Mr. Cambell appreciated thoroughness in all things, and there was, he realized, a place for thoroughness even in such a perplexing thing as art. He hated half-way measures, and admired this clear, methodical efficiency and sure grasp of the subject which his wife so distinctly displayed. She was a remarkable woman.

In the third room, a picture caught and held his attention. It was an extraordinary picture of a confused and intricate mass of horses, banners, spears, and warriors—a battle scene. He called to his wife, who was about to pass through the door into the next room.

"Laura," he said, "look at this one. It's a battle scene. Who did this? It's good, isn't it?" he asked.

She turned and came back to him and surveyed the picture for a moment through her lorgnette. She smiled indulgently.

"Yes, dear," she said. "Paolo Uccello. A Florentine—first half of the fifteenth century. He did a great many battle scenes. It's interesting as an experiment in perspective. You'll notice that the perspective of the kicking horse in the right-hand corner is quite wrong—quite wrong."

Her husband looked to where she was pointing, then laughed.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, "I should say it is wrong. I should say it is. Ha, ha! It certainly is. . . ."

He stood in front of the picture in amusement while his wife moved on to more significant things in Room Number Four. Laurence and their daughter, Mildred, who had been lagging somewhat behind, came up to him. He turned to them, smiling.

"Look at this," he said. "Isn't this

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funny? Just look at the position of that horse. Isn't that rich? The perspective's all out—all out."

They stood looking at it for several moments. Then Mr. Cambell glanced anxiously through the door to where he could see his wife, already two rooms ahead of him, frowning up at a "Coronation of the Virgin." He excused himself hurriedly and turned to join her. Before he left them, however, he winked significantly at them both in turn.

"I guess you two can appreciate *art* all right without my help," he said, smiling broadly. "I notice you are very thorough about each room. It's a great thing, thoroughness."

"Yes, very," agreed Mildred, while Laurence blushed slightly, then coughed and took out his handkerchief in an attempt to hide his confusion.

Slowly they made the circuit of the room, looking at pictures by Florentine masters of the fifteenth century. They stopped in front of a "Madonna and Child."

"That combination of very light red and gray is beautiful, isn't it?" said Mildred. "It's so spiritual, that color."

"Yes," said Laurence, "very spiritual. Mildred, you do love me, don't you?"

"Of course I do, Larry darling. You know that. Do you have to ask me that?"

They looked at each other for a moment. Their hands, which were at their sides, met for a second and they leaned instinctively toward each other. Then they drew apart as some people approached them. They walked on into the next room.

In front of them, Saint Sebastian, pierced by a dozen arrows, looked absent-mindedly up to heaven, as if he were wondering whether or not it would rain.

"Oh, Lord!" exclaimed Laurence as he glanced at the painting, "I'm so sick of Saint Sebastian. He doesn't know what suffering is, with nothing but arrows stuck into him. Mildred, you are so beautiful."

She smiled up at him.

"Even here," she asked, "among all these beautiful things?"

"They're cold," he said, "cold and dry and dead. You're alive, Mildred, alive and warm and breathing. You . . . you're everything."

"Children, children"—they were aware of a brisk voice behind them—"don't waste your time here. Come to the Botticelli room. It's getting late. They're superb, marvellous. Your father, Mildred, is entranced with them, simply entranced, my dear."

They were swept along in the rushing current of Mrs. Cambell's dynamic personality. Laurence stifled a sigh as he turned his back on Saint Sebastian. They were whirled through the next room.

"Only the Siennese school," Mrs. Cambell threw back over her shoulder. "Quite unimportant, quite. Botticelli . . ."

She rounded the corner of Room Number Six with a thudding of rubber-soled shoes like the put-put of a small steam-engine. How infinitely more graceful, thought Laurence, how gloriously lithe is her daughter. How slender and young and cool. . . .

As they entered the Botticelli room Mrs. Cambell beckoned impatiently to them. Her husband, quite obviously entranced, stood by her side looking up at her, waiting for information on this apparently very important master. Mrs. Cambell cleared her throat preparatory to speaking.

"These," she said, permitting herself a slight wave of the hand, "are the famous Botticellis. Of course you all know that Botticelli is the culmination, the finest example of the work of the Florentine Renaissance."

She paused for a moment impressively. Mr. Cambell nodded his head and

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waited. Of course every one knew Botticelli. Mildred and Laurence looked at each other. There was a little shadow in the curve between her chin and throat, close to the ear, against which Laurence had pressed his lips. They looked at Mrs. Cambell. Again she cleared her throat, raising her chin up a little above the high collar of the shirt-waist which she was wearing.

"The round one nearest the door," she continued, "is the famous 'Madonna of the Magnificat.' It is one of Botticelli's most beautiful works. The circular composition of it is particularly fine."

Again she permitted herself a gesture —this time a circular one—as she looked critically over one shoulder at the picture.

"The one next to it," she said, advancing a few steps farther, "is, of course, the famous 'Birth of Venus.'"

"Of course," murmured Mr. Cambell, "very beautiful."

"A beautiful figure, isn't it?" said Laurence, feeling called upon to say something to Mrs. Cambell.

She looked at him, at the portrait, at him.

"Yes and no," she said decisively.

"Oh," said Laurence.

"Yes and no," she repeated. "It's very Botticellian, of course, slim, ethereal, and all that. But idealized," she added sharply, "extremely idealized. Even a bit unhealthy in a way, I might say."

"Oh, but . . ." began Laurence, protesting.

Mrs. Cambell held up her hand.

"Yes, yes, I know," she said, "it's the fashion nowadays to be thin, but it's unhealthy, nevertheless. Women weren't meant to be thin. It stands to reason. Women must be robust if they are to fulfil their highest purpose in life, the continuance of the human race."

"Oh, but . . ." repeated Laurence. "I . . ."

Mrs. Cambell gave him a sharp look.

"Won't you want your wife to give you fine, healthy children when you are married?" she demanded.

"Why, yes, of course, I guess so," said Laurence hesitatingly.

"Of course you do," Mrs. Cambell beamed. "She, you see," pointing at the Venus, "*she* died at the age of seventeen. Fundamentally an unhealthy type. Her name was La Bella Simonetta," she added as an afterthought. "They say that Botticelli was very much in love with her. Very beautiful, of course, as a picture, but not a sound type, not a sound type at all."

They moved on in their trip around the room. As they paused before the next painting, Mrs. Cambell turned to them again, smiling fondly.

"Of course," she said, "I don't want you to think that I don't see the beauty in that type of figure at a certain time in a woman's life. On the contrary, I find the slenderness of young girls, even young women, most delightful." She glanced from Laurence to Mildred and back. "Most delightful. And naturally they don't always keep the figures which they have at twenty, although a lot of women nowadays make the mistake of trying to, with the result that they endanger both their health and the health of their children as well."

They moved on, through the Botticelli room, into the rooms of later masters, Mrs. Cambell leading the way, like an eager hunting-dog, nostrils dilated, guide-book in hand, hot on the scent of the higher things.

"Ha!" exclaimed Mrs. Cambell after a time, looking up from her guide-book.

"Yes, dear?" inquired her husband helpfully.

"Rubens," she announced impressively. "The next room contains the Rubens'."

They proceeded on to the next room.

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At the entrance she gave a rapid glance about.

"Of course," she said, "every one knows that the collection of Rubens' here isn't nearly as complete as that in the Louvre, but there seems to be a fairly representative number of pieces."

She paused for a moment, looking from one picture to another. Then she continued.

"Rubens," she said, "was a very great colorist and a master of tremendous compositions. Most of the pictures here are fairly small, but you can get an idea of the tremendous conceptions he had, even from them. Very impressive, very impressive, indeed—and such color!"

Mr. Cambell stood looking earnestly at a rather gay and unconventional scene of revelry, involving satyrs, ladies, and, very obviously, the grape.

"Don't you think, my dear," he ventured at length, addressing his wife, "that the female figures are somewhat . . . er . . . fleshy?"

"I dare say that point might arise," replied his wife, looking up at the picture, her lips slightly pursed. "Rubens has been criticised for that. But as for me, I should say no—definitely. The magnitude of his compositions calls for figures of a greater . . . er . . . ampleness than is usual. Of course, compared to Botticelli, they are rather large. But then, Botticelli's women are an idealization, distinctly an idealization."

She shut her guide-book with a snap and tucked it under her arm.

"I think that's enough for this morning, don't you?" she inquired. "It's almost lunch-time, and, besides, one shouldn't go through a gallery too rapidly if one wishes to get the full benefit of it. To-morrow we'll do the rest of it. We don't want to be Cook's tourists, and try to break records in seeing things."

"Hardly," agreed Mr. Cambell, laughing.

She turned to go, followed by her husband, and, a short distance behind, by Laurence and her daughter.

On their way out they again passed the door of the Botticelli room. As they went by, Laurence caught a glimpse of the Venus, rising from the seas slim and young and beautiful. He leaned over a little toward Mildred.

"You're as beautiful," he whispered to her.

She looked at him, her eyes shining.

"Ah, dear, if I only were," she said. "For you . . ."

"Bella Simonetta," he murmured. "Bella . . ."

Mr. Cambell turned partly around, looking back at them and smiling.

"Well," he said, "it's been a great morning, hasn't it? It's a fine collection, all right."

"Those beautiful Botticellis," said Laurence dutifully.

"Yes, and remember that funny horse? Darnedest thing I've ever seen. No perspective, no perspective at all. And then of course those tremendous Rubens'," he added hurriedly. "Those powerful compositions, those colors."

"Oh, yes, of course," agreed Laurence. "The Rubens'."

He looked at a little wisp of yellow hair which curled out in front of Mildred's ear. Its color reminded him of the flowing yellow hair of the young Venus. They quickened their pace a little to catch up with Mrs. Cambell, who was swinging down the hall with her long stride, her broad, rubber-soled shoes making a soft thudding sound each time they struck the floor.

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As I Like It

By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

100 Best Books for Summer Reading

At the time these lines appear in print, the honey breath of summer will begin to soften the air; fifty or sixty thousand Scribnerians will be thinking of the mountains or the sea, or, with passports and cabins secured, will await with some impatience the day of departure for Europe. It may therefore not be impertinent to provide a carefully selected list of books for summer reading; and as I sit at my typewriter and look out at the April rain, I can visualize individual readers on the piazzas of hotels, on the porches of cottages, in the hammocks under trees, in reclining chairs on the decks of steamships, turning over the pages of the volumes I am about to name.

Merely because the weather is warm, or because one is far from routine, or because one is travelling, it does not necessarily follow that one should read only inanities; the best books in any season of the year or in any place are those that combine diversion with instruction. As I have said before and shall say again, I divide all readers into two classes—those who read to remember and those who read to forget. We should read to forget only when there is something that ought to be forgotten, for example, oneself. I believe it is possible not only to remember things that one has read in a book, but also to remember the pleasure one had in the reading; just as I can remember not only the music of great operas, but my delight when I heard it.

If I were making out a list for children or for imbeciles or for featherbrains, the list would be more in the nature of a physician's prescription; for harmless idiots, I do not recommend good plays in the theatre, I recommend musical comedies, which seem almost providentially provided to meet their especial requirements.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Men and Memories," by Sir William Rothenstein. Coward, McCann. $5.

"Education of a Princess," by Grand Duchess Marie. Viking. $3.50.

"My Story," by Mary Roberts Rinehart. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.

Mary Gladstone "Diaries," edited by L. Masterman. Dutton. $5.

"Lives of a Bengal Lancer," by F. Yeats-Brown. Viking. $2.75.

"Story of San Michele," by Axel Munthe. Dutton. $3.75.

"Roadside Meetings," by Hamlin Garland. Macmillan. $2.50.

"Lone Cowboy," by Will James. Scribners. $2.75.

"In the Days of Bicycles and Bustles," by R. L Blumenfeld. Brewer & Warren. $3.50.

"My Own Yesterdays," by Charles R. Brown. Century. $2.

"Theatre Street," by Karsavina. Dutton. $5.

"Stage-struck John Golden," by John Golden and Viola Shore. Samuel French. $4.

"Memories of Ninety Years," by H. M. Rogers. Houghton, Mifflin. $5.

"I'd Like to Do It Again," by Owen Davis. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.

"As We Were," by E. F. Benson. Longmans, Green. $4.

BIOGRAPHY

"Daniel Webster," by Claude Fuess. Little, Brown. $10.

"The Stricken Deer," by Lord Cecil. Bobbs, Merrill. $5.

"D. L. Moody," by W. R. Moody. Macmillan. $3.50.

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"William Pitt the Younger," by P. W. Wilson. Doubleday, Doran. $3.
"John Wesley," by John D. Wade. Coward, McCann. $3.50.
"Alexander Pope," by Edith Sitwell. Cosmopolitan. $4.
"Whistler the Friend," by Elizabeth R. Pennell. Lippincott. $3.
"The Life of Christ in Woodcuts," by James Reid. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.
"Mrs. Sigourney," by Gordon Haight. Yale University Press. $3.
"Swift," by Carl Van Doren. Viking. $3.
"Xenophon," by L. V. Jacks. Scribners. $2.
"Taking the Curtain Call," by Doris Arthur Jones. Macmillan. $4.
"Paul Revere," by Emerson Taylor. Dodd, Mead. $2.
"Jane Austen," by R. Brimley Johnson. Dutton. $3.

MISCELLANEOUS

"Pre-War America," by Mark Sullivan. Scribners. $5.
"Blenheim," by G. M. Trevelyan. Longmans, Green. $7.50.
"By Way of Cape Horn," by A. J. Villiers. Holt. $3.50.
"Builders of Delusion," by Henshaw Ward. Bobbs, Merrill. $3.50.
"A Defense of Philosophy," by R. B. Perry. Harpers. $1.
"Great Dipper to Southern Cross," by E. H. Dodd, Jr. Dodd, Mead. $3.50.
"Upstage," by J. M. Brown. Norton. $3.
"The Mysterious Universe," by Sir James Jeans. Macmillan. $2.25.
"Letters of James Whitcomb Riley." Bobbs, Merrill. $5.
"Letters to Her Sister" (Henrietta). Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Dutton. $5.
"Those Earnest Victorians," by E. Wingfield-Stratford. Wm. Morrow. $3.50.
"Uncle Sam's Attic," by Mary Lee Davis. W. A. Wilde Co. $3.50.
"These Russians," by Wm. C. White. Scribners. $3.
"Out of Soundings," by H. M. Tomlinson. Harpers. $4.
"Conversations with George Moore," by G. Goodwin. Knopf. $3.
"Alternatives to War," by Florence G. Tuttle. Harpers. $3.

RELIGIOUS

"Who Moved the Stone?" by Frank Morison. Century. $2.50.
"The Kingdom of God in the New Testament," by E. F. Scott. Macmillan. $1.75.
"Christianity and Common Sense," by G. F. Bradby. Oxford. $1.
"The Mind of Christ in Paul," by Frank C. Porter. Scribners. $2.50.
"The Meaning of the Cross," by Henry S. Coffin. Scribners. $1.50.
"Jesus and the American Mind," by Harold E. Luccock. Abingdon. $2.
"The Social Teaching of the Church," by Dean Inge. Abingdon. $1.

HUMOROUS

"The John Riddell Murder Case," by Corey Ford. Scribners. $2.
"Big Money," by P. G. Wodehouse. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
"Through the Alimentary Canal," by George Chappell. Stokes. $2.
"The Treasurer's Report," by Robert Benchley. Harpers. $2.
"Year In, You're Out," by Samuel Hoffenstein. Liveright. $2.
"Yesterdays," by Frank Wing. Riley & Lee. $1.25.
"Hard Lines," by Ogden Nash. Simon & Schuster. $2.
"1066 and All That," by W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman. Dutton. $1.75.

NOVELS

"The Wrong Side of the Tracks." Anon. Bobbs, Merrill. $2.50.
"My Outrageous Cousin," by Marian Torrey. Macmillan. $2.
"Miss Barrett's Elopement," by C. Lenanton. Holt. $2.50.
"The Good Hope," by H. S. Harrison. Houghton, Mifflin. $2.
"Roman Holiday," by Upton Sinclair. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.
"On Forsyte Change," by John Galsworthy. Scribners. $2.50.
"Shepherds in Sackcloth," by Sheila Kaye-Smith. Harpers. $2.50.
"Philippa," by Anne Douglas Sedgwick. Houghton, Mifflin. $2.50.
"The Rector's Daughter," by F. M. Mayor. Coward, McCann. $2.
"Mirthful Haven," by Booth Tarkington. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
"A Hair Divider," by Claude Houghton. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
"Tides of Malvern," by Francis Griswold. Morrow. $2.50.

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"Miss Mole," by E. H. Young. Harcourt, Brace. $2.
"Dr. Serocold," by Helen Ashton. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.
"Memoirs of an Infantry Officer," by Siegfried Sassoon. Coward, McCann. $2.50.
"The Deepening Stream," by Dorothy Canfield. Harcourt, Brace. $2.
"The Street of the Islands," by Stark Young. Scribners. $2.50.
"Shrimps for Tea," by Josephine Blumenfeld. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
"Father," by Elizabeth. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

POETRY

"Collected Poems," by Robert Frost. Holt. $5.
"Ballads and Poems," by Stephen Benét. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.
"The Glory of the Nightingales," by E. A. Robinson. Macmillan. $2.
"The Carpenter Lad," by Richard Burton. Bobbs, Merrill. $2.
"Selected Poems of Thomas Walsh." Dial. $2.50.

THRILLERS

"The Silver King Mystery," by Ian Grieg. Holt. $2.
"The Lion and the Lamb," by E. P. Oppenheim. Little, Brown. $2.
"Somewhere in this House," by Rufus King. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
"Number Naught," by Selden Truss. Dodd, Mead. $2.
"The Gang Smasher," by Hugh Clevely. Clode. $2.
"The Strangler Fig," by John S. Strange. Doubleday, Doran. $1.
"Trackless Death," by A. Livingston. Bobbs, Merrill. $2.
"The Two Ticket Mystery," by J. J. Conington. Little, Brown. $2.
"The Voice in the Closet," by H. M. Langdon. Liveright. $2.
"About the Murder of Geraldine Foster," by A. Abbott. Covici Friede. $2.
"The Murderer Invisible," by Philip Wylie. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.
"The Praying Monkey," by Gavin Holt. Dial. $2.
"Black Buck," by L. C. Hopkins. Little, Brown. $2.
"Stroke of One," by R. A. J. Walling. Morrow. $2.
"The Mammon of Righteousness," by P. C. Wren. Stokes. $2.
"Tainted Power," by Carroll J. Daly. Clode. $2.

Of course there is not space to comment on one-tenth of these books; but readers who have confidence in me know that I will not let them down. Every book in the long list is interesting; many are inspiring and many are diverting.

Sir William Rothenstein's "Men and Memories" is absolutely charming. It is the story of an artist who spent part of his youth in Paris and part in Oxford; he gives delightful anecdotes of Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater, Max Beerbohm, and others. He talks only of interesting people and of them only in an interesting way. But there is more to the book than its contents; although even if it were badly written, it would still be worth reading. It is the revelation of a remarkable personality, of a keen and tolerant mind, of an affectionate heart. Fortunate indeed are the intimate friends of this man.

It will be instructive to read together the "Education of a Princess" and Mrs. Rinehart's "My Story"; except for the fact that they were both nurses in tragic surroundings, the two books could not better illustrate the life of a woman in an autocracy and in a democracy. The Grand Duchess's story of her education in the most inaccessible court in the world helps to explain the Russia of the past and the present; she was graduated from the exclusive school of princesses into womanhood; and there can be little doubt in which state she found more happiness. Mrs. Rinehart's amazing book proves that she could write the most naturalistic and pessimistic novels if she chose to, for no woman knows more of the terrible tragedies of life.

It is also interesting to compare what Doctor Axel Munthe says of himself

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with what the Grand Duchess says of him. These two books have led the list of best sellers in America for many months.

All candidates for the ministry, all ministers, and all readers interested in American life should read the informal, unpretentious, disarming autobiography by the Reverend Doctor Charles R. Brown, called "My Own Yesterdays." It is wholly American in its atmosphere; it shows how good family training, followed by hard work and self-reliance, may naturally and inevitably make a man rise from obscurity to nation-wide reputation and influence. From earliest childhood to the present moment Doctor Brown was never afraid of hard work and the responsibilities that come with it. And the book helps to show why it is, that although Christian ministers have more difficulties and discouragements than men of any other profession, and although there is not a single worldly inducement for entering the ranks of clergymen, they are probably the happiest class of men on earth.

John Golden's autobiography is as full of mirth and high-hearted, robust delight in life as is Owen Davis's; it is a cheerful book by a warm-hearted man.

The most important biography in the past year is Claude Fuess's "Daniel Webster," which is a model. It is scholarly, completely documented, and somehow combines austere distinction with vivacity. All American men and women who in their childhood belched out in "declamation" at school "Paul Revere's Ride" will find it highly interesting to read Mr. Taylor's biography.

The philosophical historian George Macaulay Trevelyan has given us a remarkably interesting picture of Queen Anne England in "Blenheim." This book is built to last. The young Australian A. J. Villiers is not only a deep-water sailor of enormous experience for one still in the twenties, he is a natural-born literary artist. I counsel all who love stories of adventure and the conquest of the ocean by human beings, to read three books by Mr. Villiers: "By Way of Cape Horn," "Falmouth for Orders," and the latest one, "Vanished Fleets" (all published by Henry Holt. $3.50).

Henshaw Ward's "Builders of Delusion" is for minds that are both active and tough. He himself is like Socrates in that he tells us we know nothing; or anyhow, that we know very much less than we think we know. He has an alert, shrewd, inquiring mind; it is stimulating, whether we agree with him or not, to read such a book as this. In a way it might be called a discussion of the theory of knowledge; how do we know that we know anything? But whether we do or not, it is perhaps well to remember that everything we do that has any real interest or importance is founded not on knowledge but on faith. I mean of course such things as going to college, choosing an occupation, getting married, joining a political party, joining the church. Since actual knowledge consists only of things on which all men agree, facts are never so interesting as ideas and opinions.

H. M. Tomlinson combines distinction in literary art with extraordinary beauty of character. It seems incredible that a man could have so much experience of the rough side of life and keep the heart of a little child. If you read the first essay in his new book, that one about the Brown Owl, you will read on.

Among the novels, I wish to call especial attention to "My Outrageous Cousin," by Marian Richards Torrey, because it has a flavor all its own. The characters are original, the style is individual, the suspense is enthralling. With all its unexpectedness, one feels it is true; these are real people and they

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behave as such. This book resembles nothing else that I have read. The author writes out of her own mind and from her own point of view. She has observed and she has reflected.

"The Wrong Side of the Tracks" is such a cold-blooded, deliberate account of the methods and achievements of a social climber, that it is not surprising the author did not wish her name to be known. How many who were little girls who suffered at school from little snobs will read these pages with recognition!

Scholars and special students of English literature will welcome a new and definitive biography of Abraham Cowley, by Professor Arthur H. Nethercot, of Northwestern University (Oxford University Press. $4.75). On the title-page Cowley (in his own time pronounced Cooley) is called "The Muse's Hannibal," which well describes his career. This is a good book, and more interesting than its hero's poems.

Inasmuch as there is so much excitement about the Brownings, a little book of pure appreciation will serve very acceptably as an introduction to the study of their poetry. It is by Harriet Gaylord, is called "Pompilia and her Poet" (Literary Publications. $2.50), and has an introduction by Charles Hanson Towne. On the jacket is printed the modest inscription "A Book for Those Who Do Not Know the Brownings."

The recent death of Arnold Bennett on March 27 takes away one of the leaders of contemporary English literature. Among the vast number of books that he wrote, two, "The Old Wives Tale" and "Riceyman Steps," seem to have the best chance to survive. F. P. A. in his column in *The Herald Tribune* narrates a charming anecdote about Mr. Bennett's visit to America. James Whitcomb Riley said to him, "You look like a kind-hearted man, and I think you are." Thomas E. Murray, Jr., of 1250 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn, sends me a copy of a letter that Arnold Bennett wrote to his brother Joe, Yale 1910 Sheff, whose family consists of five girls. The letter is a reply to Mr. Murray's remarks as to how well his girls ride horseback.

75, Cadogan Square,
S.W. 1

21st December 1929.

Dear Mr. Murray,

Thank you for your letter. Your story of your father is very interesting. Your story of the young ladies is more than interesting. It is, to me, distressing. Young ladies ought in my opinion to be brought up to do something more than play the piano and dance and ride and talk French. My view is that everyone, however rich, and beautiful, ought to be brought up to earn his or her own living. Also that all women who have any notion of getting married ought to learn to be professional housekeepers in every department of this vast and difficult task.

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

ARNOLD BENNETT.

J. B. Murray, Esq.

A letter from Dan G. Fisher, of Dallas, Texas, ought to give delight to authors, publishers, and sellers of books. It shows also that if you *own* books, their very presence is stimulating and agreeable, like that of silent friends.

There is nothing, Dr. Phelps, I get quite as much pleasure out of like I do my books. There is no Seventh Heaven like a good book, a pipe, and an easy chair—then it is that I agree with the man who said that "Books Once Were Men." There are times at night, when nothing in the world is more satisfying than to sit quietly in my chair alone, doing nothing at all, and only my books are vocal in the gloom beside me. There are times when I think I would like to sit just so, among my books forever and ever—and over in that corner where my favorite books are is where my thoughts linger lovingly the longest.

Mrs. Viola Passig Johnson, of Sigourney, Iowa, writes:

I notice that in the March number of SCRIB-

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NER's, "As I Like It," it says "The only thing that remains of Mrs. Sigourney is Sigourney Street, Hartford."

Keokuk County, Iowa has for its county seat a thriving country village named for Lydia Sigourney. Its court yard, elm shadowed, is lovely beyond compare, because Mrs. Sigourney in the long-ago sent us money for the planting of these now-tall-spreading trees.

We who live here say: "Sig'ourney." An outsider, even our railroad conductors say: "Sig ur' ney" with the middle long drawn out. Why?

From W. P. Yiend, of Atlanta:

Permit me to instruct you in the origin and use of "thon."

It is a demonstrative adjective (less frequently a pronoun) constantly in use in the dialect of northeast Ireland, particularly the town of Belfast. It displaces "that" entirely in the vocabulary of those using it. Also it is the derivative of "thonder." There is evidently some connection with "yon" and "yonder" which our poets use to express the same meaning.

In Lisburn one Sunday, in the company of an Episcopalian clergyman, I paid a visit of condolence at the house where the recent death of a son was mourned. Deceased was a husky young chap. I forget what caused his death.

We gazed in silence for a while at his dead face and turned to leave. His father burst out into violent sobbing and cried:

"Many's the spoonful of good gravy's gone into thon feller."

George H. Tripp, Librarian of the Free Public Library of New Bedford, Mass., writes:

In your many travels, meeting constantly unusual words, did you ever happen to come across the word "torshent?" The only place where I ever came across that word was on Cape Cod; when a youth from college I was teaching school there for a short time. I afterwards found the word in the dictionary, and it still is in the Century Dictionary, 1911. The word means a favorite child, origin obscure. A doctor with whom I was boarding seemed to think possibly the origin of the word might be from the Latin indicating the way in which a child wound itself around into the affection of his parents.

For the strengthening of hearts, I gladly print the following letter about a gallant centenarienne. The letter is written by Romaine Jackson Hamilton, of Cleveland.

I have been reading *Just* As I Like It in January SCRIBNER'S. I came to the part about subconscious poetry. Several years ago I discovered I had composed my first and only poem. I woke from a heavy dream in which our staid, village pastor had been declaiming from his pulpit:

"The world is old enough to be
A toothpick on a turnip tree."

Really that would fit my loved "modern" sermons; they *must* allow me the benefit of the doubt as to just when my world began to begin. But seldom do ministers become so alliterative and rhythmical in my *waking* experiences.

Perhaps the fact that I could compose a poem (even if in a dream) is due to inheritance. January 15th my grandmother was 100 years old and her latest jingle had been more flatteringly received than all her hitherto unprinted ones. In fact in the last month of her 99th year her first publication was accomplished (in local papers). Because it is interesting, I quote the way they truthfully depicted her 100th birthday:

"Bedridden for three years with a broken hip, 'Aunt Mary' had to be carried downstairs to take part in the festivities honoring her. This physical helplessness ends her disabilities.

"Mentally as agile as her friends half a century younger than she, 'Aunt Mary' occupied her stellar position of the occasion with ease. She contributed more than her share of the day's conversation on the events of the world, on literature, on the affairs transpiring around her.

"She regaled her guests with many anecdotes of her long life. She saw the first train pass through Bedford, Ohio, where she was attending school. Just 18 years old then, she recalls vividly that school was dismissed, so they could see the engine and caboose pass through the town.

"Early in her life a log cabin was her home, lighted by candles, the spinning wheel beside the fireplace. She was taught to spin wool and tow from flax. Then she took the thread to the weaver's and had the cloth made. When

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she taught school, she says, 'I was expected to teach everything from the A. B. C.'s to algebra for $1.00 a week, and was boarded 'round at the homes of my pupils.'

"Her century span of life she attributed to three factors, regular habits, being temperate in all things and faith in God and the intellectual side of life."

Horace E. Henderson, of Pawling School, joins the F. Q. Club, having read the entire work in 1880, the year after he was graduated from college. Little did he know then of his future glamour.

Eugene deF. Heald, of Renoir Rhyne College, Hickory, N. C., read the entire poem through in one week. Possibly this is a record. He writes, "What a delightful backward glance into the world of romance!"

Edward J. Hecker, Jr., of Indianapolis, one of my former Yale pupils, has recently finished the F. Q. and has started on a second reading. He comments in an interesting manner on the name Evelyn:

There is another matter of which I would speak. You once remarked that, in England, Evelyn was dissyllabic. Rejoicing in an affected insularity I had adopted this idiosyncrasy as I had President Angell's penultimate accent of concentrate. But, to my horror, I met a girl with a perfectly good English surname who spelled her Christian name Evælyn! Now a born Britisher could compass this difficulty —could, probably pronounce "Evegledenton" in two syllables—but my mid-western provincialism rebelled, and with punctured, if not deflated vanity, I have returned to Ev-e-lyn.

The well-beloved Daniel Frohman sends me the following interesting information:

The late Leonard Grover, a well known theatrical manager of the early 70's, was the Manager of the theatre in Washington in 1865 wherein Abraham Lincoln was shot.

He told me the following curious story in connection with that event.

It was the custom of the President to send word to Mr. Grover to say when it would be convenient for him and his family to attend a performance at Ford's Theatre.

One day previous to the memorable tragedy, he drove down Pennsylvania Avenue and stopped in front of the theatre. He tore off a margin from the newspaper in his possession, and wrote on it that he and his family would be happy to attend the next evening. The play was "Our American Cousin."

About this time Mr. Grover was negotiating with J. Wilkes Booth for a continuance of his contract as an actor in the Ford Theatre Company. Mr. Booth wrote Mr. Grover a note on a sheet of paper folded in two sections, saying he would accept the renewal.

Mr. Grover tossed Lincoln's script into a receptacle, and he also put by Mr. Booth's letter.

Many years afterward (Mr. Grover told me) in looking through an old trunk to get letters and material for a book he was writing, he came across Mr. Booth's old letter, folded. Inside the fold of the letter was the strip of newspaper Lincoln had used to write on.

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Guardian Angel

(Continued from page 661)

"Oh, Fleta, Fleta," she murmured. "No one —no one is good enough to know her. Everything she does is a gift to the world but they can't see. No one can accept what she has to give because no one can see. And now perhaps it was all a test and I'm—vile—dishonest—I lie and I don't know I am lying or really care—and I don't know now what I have actually done or how enormous it really is—and it is a test and I'm not good enough, I haven't measured up and she has tried to teach me how to be in life."

"What do you mean?"

She got up impatiently, as if she couldn't speak, shaking her head back and forth and drawing up long breaths and then sighing horribly. Finally she sank down on the couch. "How can you be so casual about it, Aunt Grace?"

"But it isn't horribly important. Every one has done something like that."

"Well, if you want to know it, I'm not going to be loose and dishonest like every one. If you can overlook anything as dishonorable as that, then I can't respect you, Aunt Grace." She turned her face away, her chin high.

"Darling," I said, "I'd rather tell lies than be snouty and feel that I was better than other people. Really."

She walked over to the fireplace suddenly and held her body rigid, drawing her face together in agony. "What do you mean by that?" she asked. "No, don't tell me! Don't tell me! I don't want to know the satanic things you have in your brain——"

I was startled. I picked up my hemstitching, feeling rather strange. I tried to remember what I was going to say. It seemed as if I had swallowed my words. All through my head was the odd vacant sensation you have when you try to remember some one's name, for example, or a telephone number or street address. Then something just rushed into my head and filled it. I hadn't thought of it from the day I concealed it from myself in deep shame. I was in the first grade and some one had found a cheap fancy brooch in the playground. It was very ornate with a bulge in the centre and a woman's face painted on it. The hair was floating and very long with some flowers caught up in the side. When the teacher held it up and asked if it belonged to any of us I stood up immediately. I said aloud, "That belongs to my Aunt Ella. She works in Bloom's store and that's a picture of her when she was a girl."

I stood there solidly and the teacher questioned me. The pupils stared with open mouths, leaning forward on their elbows, their moist lips following my words. One boy was making pictures on the varnished desk top with his eraser. I remember the long soft gray marks. I knew I had told a lie and yet I believed what I had said. I knew it was false and yet I couldn't stop acting as if it were true or stop believing in some strange way that it was true all the time I knew it wasn't. I had all kinds of defenses ready in case any one should question me but the teacher put the pin in her desk and asked us to open our readers to page fourteen. It seems to me now that I have always felt odd when that number fourteen comes in. It seems as if I have tried to remember something that lies in the back of my mind. When I read directions for knitting—"cast fourteen stitches"—I have felt odd. I remembered that now. Suddenly I seemed to understand something about my whole life and other people. I felt more life inside me.

"Let's be happy, Vanessa!" I cried impulsively. "Let's compose a song. I want to sing magnificently."

"It's seeing truth in a big way instead of the small usual way," she said. "I have been living in the small usual way like other people. Fleta is above all that. She is uncompromising. She sees all our little motives and actions." She jumped up. "How she must suffer, knowing what we are!" And then, as if she couldn't endure another instant of self-denunciation and remorse, she said, "Could a person come out of something like that—stronger, Aunt Grace? Could a person be a bigger person for having suffered it?"

"Oh, you darling child," I said.

"To thine own self be true!" she said in a deep ringing voice. She looked at me as if I were old and had forgotten something important. But I couldn't believe it was so very important. She stood over me and half shouted, "Aunt Grace, what road are you on? Where are you going? Are your innocent children going to stand with the builders or the wreckers?" Then she went out of the house.

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V

Belle called me on the telephone. "Come over this evening and cheer us up," she said. "Edwin is worried about the talk he had with Mr. Bope. He's so upset I wish you'd come if you possibly can and bring Wendall along."

We went. I put my hand on Edwin's shoulder for a moment and then sat down where I could see his face. He was staring at the toe of his shoe, his arms crossed, and his mouth set in that stiff stubborn line that makes his chin solid, even stony. I felt a sharp pang for him because he has always thought of his family in terms of the things he might do for them, the solid costly way he might care for them, and his eyes are always turned toward that vision of the future that he must have, where he will be able to stop and enjoy his wife and daughter and his material possessions, as the reward for having toiled so whole-heartedly.

"Things look bad," he said drearily.

"Oh, don't let's talk about it now," said Belle. "You know nothing has happened yet."

"But it will," he said fatally. "It always does."

"But, Edwin," I said. "I'm sure Bope wouldn't permit the works to fail on account of what he would lose."

"Of course he won't fail," said Wendall. "Bope's a good business man, he's sound as far as money is concerned—sound. Don't worry about it, Edwin."

"That's true. And we've known Pliny for years and he isn't ever going to lose money. We know that."

"I'll grant you that," said Edwin. "But perhaps if he lets it fail he can gain. Had you thought of that?"

Belle turned up her face to him with all the lines showing and the worn sweet look around her mouth, one hand raised, her lips parted in a kind of protest against Edwin's violence toward an acquaintance. "Don't let's think of it, dear," she said. "I used to worry," she added, turning to me, "but somehow I can't any more."

As I looked at them I remembered those two a long time ago; Belle in her going-away clothes, her face positively dewy, an astrachan cap on her head and bands of the fur on her wine-colored gown. Edwin was nervous that day, smiling and shaking hands a great deal, but worried between the eyes, tense. Jack Morris was there, too, being very polite to them both even though Belle had refused him twice before she became engaged to Edwin. And the last thing Edwin said to me as he kissed me good-by was, "Grace, we're going to be happy. In two years I'll have more money than Morris ever dreamed of having. . . ."

Here were the same lamps they had been given for wedding presents, the rug, the set of Shakespeare and Dickens on the bookshelves. There were the cheap chairs they had bought cheerfully with visions of the finer, softer ones in their minds making them content. There was the same old table loaded with books, one of the legs in need of glue. And Edwin's manner was so different in his home that I realized again why Vanessa never laughed anywhere except out-of-doors. His eyes were always so disappointed, so persecuted, and he sat brooding, in hurt silence, or else he talked in a booming voice that silenced the women.

"How about some bridge?" suggested Wendall.

"I'm expecting to be bankrupt in about four weeks, Wendall," said Edwin looking up and unfolding his arms. "Well, I've always lost, I've always got the worst of it, and I've done nothing but worry all my life. If I lose the last of it now it'll be almost a relief to me," he said whitening, bringing his fist down on the arm of the chair. "It'll be a relief."

Belle looked down weakly at her rings. "Perhaps we need the lesson," she murmured and began rubbing the back of her hand.

"Edwin, is it really so bad?" I said.

"Yes."

But I couldn't be sure. Edwin has always seen things in terms of calamity and I never can decide whether he is giving the facts or merely punishing himself and his family by anticipating the worst. The only hopeful statement I can ever remember him uttering was that one after his wedding, "In two years I'll have more money than Morris ever dreamed of having. . . ." Why did this scene suddenly come before me? My father, Edwin and myself sitting waiting to go to church, waiting for my mother, who finally came down looking beautiful in her feather hat and boa, saying, "Dear, may I have a dime for the plate?" Father replied, without changing expression, "Dear, I don't think I have a dime." She went to her purse that lay on the desk. "Then I shall have to put in a quarter," she said serenely. Instantly he shoved his hand into his pocket and said with great dignity, "Dear, I believe I have a dime. Yes, dear, here it is." At the table he would notice that the baby liked something and he would say, "Mama, give Irving yours. He likes it." My mother always smiled gently and gave it to Irving, giving my father a quick indulgent look.

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I used to turn away, suffering horribly, and each time I vowed I would find something in life more important than money. But Edwin felt humiliated in a different way. He made money his goal so that he could be generous with it, giving his wife all that his mother had missed, giving his daughter the things his sister used to long for, and above all being generous with people, with our village, giving public buildings, donating huge sums with his name heading the lists, being the supreme benefactor of all, the wealthy, indulgent father of the town. I am sure he wanted to feel that every one's material happiness was dependent upon him and he wanted to show the whole world how a man with money ought to act.

"Well, what about some bridge?" asked Wendall again. "How about you, Belle?"

"The table's over there, Wendall," said Belle, wiping her lips with her handkerchief. "One leg is loose but shove that side toward me."

"Good," I said. "Come, Edwin!"

"Papa," said Belle gently, "please play with us."

"Well, if you want me to play, I'll play," said Edwin as if he were conferring a favor. "Personally I don't think much of bridge or any other card game."

"Yes, I know, I know," said Belle. "How pretty that dress is, Grace. I like it very much."

Just then Vanessa flew in. "I've got the grandest news," she cried. She saw her father and adjusted herself to him, sobering, as if she must always respect his grief and disappointment by a cold grayness. "You'll never guess."

"Then you didn't fail that trigonometry the way I said you would?" asked Edwin.

"Oh, *Papa!*" she cried.

He laughed. "Well, what is it?"

"You all have to guess."

"We are," said Belle. "But the suspense is too great."

"It certainly is," said Wendall. "Are you and Robert eloping or something?"

"Well, you might better do that than hang around Fleta Bain," said Edwin angrily. "That woman makes me mad all over."

Vanessa stiffened. "Clackie Weir has a beau," she said, all her excitement gone.

"Good Lord!" cried Wendall. "Since when? Who is it?"

"Guess."

"That's altogether too hard."

"I thought something was up the other night when I went over there and saw her singeing the hair off her arms out in the kitchen over the gas. Honestly she was. Now, Mother, could I make up a thing like that? Could I? She was. And her cheeks looked that odd purple, just like a turkey when you first unwrap it and get it ready to pick and draw. Honestly. But I tell you, I saw her . . ."

"No, no, dear," said Belle.

"Well, who's the lucky man?"

"You'll never guess."

"Oh, out with it!" cried Edwin impatiently.

"Pliny Bope!"

Edwin threw his cards down on the table. "Lord, that robber had it coming to him!" He began shaking his head over the table, laughing in a strange shocked way. "He's going to have a sweet life from now on."

"I noticed Miss Weir had a new hat," said Belle. "It was remarkable-looking."

"But they always are," I offered.

Belle put her hands up and began describing it with gestures. "This front part right up straight and trimmed with pieces of ribbon from candy boxes and tufts of cotton and actually those cherries you put on Christmas trees. She looked so private and sedate coming out of church that I didn't approach her."

"But one doesn't anyway," said Wendall. "Does one?"

"Oh, sometimes I ask her about her health."

"Really? How extraordinary," I said.

"Dear," said Belle, turning to Vanessa, "will you make us some coffee?"

"Sure."

Suddenly Vanessa came running back. "Oh, and Mr. Bope is wearing white wash vests with pearl buttons, and Jane and Julia told every one that if he does marry Miss Weir he has to buy them each a car. But they know how to get around him, they said, and they can get the cars even if he doesn't marry her."

"Oh, what's the use anyway," said Edwin.

"But Fleta's going to see about Mr. Bope."

"And what does she think she can do?" asked Edwin, facing his daughter.

"Fleta won't let him do it," she said giving her head little positive shakes, her face looking stern and exalted. "He can't keep on the same path if she explains it to him and shows him that he is working for death instead of life. She'll force him to see. Why, she said yesterday it was our duty to save him from doing it for his own sake, not for the sake of the money but for the sake of saving him from spiritual wreckage. We really are our brother's keeper," she said softly.

"I see. And what's Mr. Bope going to be saying to all this?" asked Edwin.

"Fleta can *make* him see."

"Well, she's a remarkable woman then."

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Vanessa whitened and caught her lip with her tooth. She looked at her mother for aid and Belle finally said weakly, "We all know that Fleta means well."

"Oh, it's more than that!" cried Vanessa. "Why, what good is it to live and be wonderful the way she is if no one is capable of seeing and understanding? Oh, I don't see . . ."

"That's true," said Belle, "we don't appreciate any one enough."

"But Fleta says that Mr. Bope is beginning to agree with her about spiritual things. He's been at her house almost every evening and she has been showing him things he has never seen before."

Edwin got up and went out on the porch. I followed him. He had his hands in his pockets and he was staring straight ahead. He looked so honest and shocked that something clouded over my whole life, everything I had ever enjoyed or earned or loved, and the future seemed almost too dark to contemplate. Somehow, I couldn't face Edwin's life, so I said lightly, "I'm sure you're just being pessimistic."

"He went over the whole thing. He has all the figures down plain. It almost convinced me. He's going to put the screws on us—a hundred per cent assessment— I could mortgage the house but that wouldn't be fair to Belle and Vanessa. He has us framed."

Everything around us was soft and dark and I felt suddenly that there was something hopeless about living. I always believed it was our fault if things turned out wrong and that we had the privilege of being noble and rising above misfortune, but now, standing in the dark with my brother, I was sickened down to my toes. Then suddenly in the centre of me I realized that I believed in a God who dealt things out to us, who gave us some compensation for everything. If he took away money, he gave something in return; if he let us suffer for a long time, then suddenly he brought us something to pay for our misery. As I stood there I saw that I could never give up this childish, weak belief, as if there was a spiritual bookkeeper in the clouds who kept the accounts. I discovered with a strange feeling deep in me that the belief was part of me and that it was as real as my arm or throat or breast, just as Bope's money was an extension of his physical body, something he lived through and expressed himself with.

I put my hands in the dark moving leaves near the porch. "I am sure, Edwin," I began.

"Yes, so am I. I've got about a month."

"But, Edwin . . ." I was ready to tell him that he wouldn't be happy if he did have a lot of money, more than Mr. Bope or Jack Morris. I was all ready to give him one of my lectures on human values versus money values. I cannot describe what happened to me. Suddenly I saw my brother. I saw, I felt, I understood my brother as he understands himself. I understood human purposes and I turned my face away from him. Everything inside me was utterly still. I felt a quietness over us both, like death, like the clear strangeness of death. I saw my mother lying in her coffin, her white face, her white hands, that puff of tulle around her neck. I remembered telling myself that she was dead, but I couldn't believe it and I suddenly ran up to her bedroom to ask her how my hair looked in back and if I should order more potatoes. Then in the cemetery, under those bare trees with drops hanging in the cold, in that instant when they lowered the coffin, I heard a shriek. It was a deep unearthly sound, like an animal and a woman in labor, and when I realized that it had come from my mouth and that my jaws were standing open and my eyes bursting out of the sockets, I ran down the hill and through the trees and graves to a muddy field.

"Oh, it is so still to-night," I said, closing my eyes.

"Yes, Grace," he answered.

"Do you remember what mother used to tell us?" I began and then I rushed back to Wendall and Belle and Vanessa. "We must go. Yes, really. Good night. . . ."

When we got outside I put my arm through Wendall's and tried to warm me on the inside where I felt so cold, so empty. I got closer and closer as we walked. Then under the dark trees I said, "I want to see my mother to-night," and all of me was shattered and aching. We went on in silence and I remembered my mother's face in adversity, the magnificent smile, the eyes, the way she sat by the window looking over the snow piled about us with forlorn sparrows huddling in gray flocks on the white under the frozen bridal-wreath.

"Oh, Wendall," I said.

He did not speak but I felt his arm and then he said "Grace!" in that sharp direct way. His voice went straight through to me. Something new and fresh sprang to life in me, rising slowly above all the deadness in me and in the world, flying full into my breast and opening, warming me until I suddenly said his name again and kissed the back of his hand, bending to it, holding it against my cheek in gratitude. Then I lifted my face. The courtyard park was empty and silent. I saw the church

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ahead and the post-office and the street-lamp at the corner. The new part of me suddenly blazed out of my pores and it made me stop for a moment and look at the enormous sky and then I longed to drop down there in the mud of the gutter, my chin against his knees, and say, "Thank you—thank you——"

VI

The Matt Beviers gave a dinner-party the other night and Mr. Bope was there. It was one of those parties that ends with singing around the piano and it was extraordinary to see Mr. Bope singing. Matt Bevier and I were sitting on the couch watching the others and suddenly Mr. Bope sprang across the room to the piano. His white hair blew out behind him—it is very fine and thick—and he threw back his head, stood on his heels, and opened his mouth into an enormous round O. He held it while they turned over pages and pages of music, and from time to time he would close his jaws, moisten his mouth, and then throw back his head and make that tremendous round O again. We didn't hear one sound from him but he must have been holding the same note with all his feeble strength.

Every one spoke of his spryness. When a lady dropped her handkerchief or bag he simply leapt across the room, knelt on an agile knee, and presented it to her with a bow before the other men had decided to move. He was flushed and eager, very kind and talkative and polite, but he got to discussing stocks with his host, and Mrs. Bevier had to go to them and tap them on the shoulder when Julian was ready to play some Beethoven for us.

"I—I—I—I—he was stopping at the same hotel—a millionaire—fine fellow—just as human and natural as you or I—gave me a tip on the market—" He looked into Mrs. Bevier's face and rose.

"Julian is going to play," she whispered.

He began to clap vigorously, clearing his throat and bending back on his polished heels. "Very talented, very talented," he said in a whisper that we all heard.

I was fascinated, thinking of him with Miss Weir. He has made Edwin suffer so much that I was glad in my vicious heart that he was going to marry her. It would balance things up a little. Fleta was always saying she was going to investigate his wages and she had tried to do something, one way or another. Once she came to Edwin. But every time I thought of him at the piano, sending out those tremendous notes that he held with his whole strength for such a long time, his whole face goose-like and the loose flesh in his neck purple, I had to think of something sad to keep from bursting out laughing.

"Will you look at Bope," whispered Wendall to me. "He jumps around as if he's had something to drink."

"Don't, Wendall," I whispered, "I shall die. I mean it."

Mr. Bope was coming toward me rapidly. He sat down, leaning forward, and said, "Mrs. De Vries, how are those fine children of yours?"

I felt possessed. I wanted to shout, jumping up and down, "There's going to be a third, there's going to be a third." But I looked him in the eye and said, "Quite well, thank you, Mr. Bope. How are your girls?"

"Excellent. Excellent. Yes, indeed. And Edwin?"

"Not so well," I said. "He's worried."

"I see—I see— Will you excuse me, Mrs. De Vries?" He bowed. "There is something I must see our host about. It's been delightful." He sprang over to Matt. "I'm convinced we can't make a cent out of it, Bevier," I heard him say. He took out his pencil and an envelope and made some figures. "Of course that sort of thing is very nice but we'd never make a profit. Let's see. Two thousand times seventy-eight——"

"Wendall, we're going," I whispered. "Do you mind?" Then I went over to Edith. "Good night, Edith, it's been lovely."

"Yes, Edith," said Wendall, "we've had a grand time."

I walked toward the door with Edith and she said, "I've been hearing gossip. Is she really engaged? Is it true?"

"Vanessa?" I said. "Isn't it awful, Edith? Here I'm her aunt and I don't know."

"We'll have to ask Fleta," said Edith and laughed.

Wendall came then and held my cape for me. When we got outside he said, "You know I'd like to be able to say something definite, seeing I'm her uncle."

"Well, I'd like to be able to at least pretend that I knew and was keeping a secret."

"What does Belle think?"

"Likes him. We all like him. He's just right for Vanessa."

"She can't see him though," said Wendall.

"I know it. But she doesn't see any one."

It was lovely and cool and dark. Wendall lighted a cigarette and we walked slowly. "You know, it's that determination to be composed and gay that makes Fleta so tragic.

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Lord, I wonder if it will make any difference to her when her aunt marries Bope and gives her some peace."

I screamed with laughter. I was ashamed of myself because I consider understanding and kindness very important. But every time Bope is mentioned I still see him standing on his heels, his mouth in that round empty O, his bland eyes rolled toward the ceiling. I kept on laughing even though I knew I would be punished for it. I held my hand over my mouth but still I couldn't stop laughing, I was so glad to see him as ridiculous and idiotic and helpless. Wendall was out of patience with me for it. He stands up for the men.

"Grace, for heaven's sake!"

"I shall die," I gasped, and threw back my head and laughed again.

"Well, the poor guy," he said finally. "You're merciless. He didn't look as bad as that."

"And what about Edwin? How is Edwin going to look? I'll laugh at Bope all I please."

"Now, don't be silly. Bope's business principles are sound as rock and he's a good business man— Say, isn't that Vanessa across the street?"

She had on her soft white hat and she was hurrying toward Fleta's house. During the day you expected a bird to hop out their front door but now at night the heavy flower clusters tossed on the palmy foliage and the house looked luminous and remote, as if it were breathing in the darkness of the soft grass. I could almost see Vanessa's parted moist lips as she climbed the steps, her feet reverent and shy. Then she put out her hand to ring. I called from across the street, "Hello, Vanessa!" and Wendall said, "Hi!" but she did not turn. Her head was back so that her hair came out under her hat and curled over the edge like blonde feathers. She clasped both hands behind her back and when the door came open she stood like that until Fleta's fingers came out to her shoulder, drawing her in.

"Good heavens, Wendall," I said. "What if she urges Vanessa to live there after her aunt goes!"

"Did you say *urges?*" said Wendall.

"And she's making the most hideous pocketbook for her. She's trying to quilt it and it's made out of some high vibration color that Fleta told her about—orchid which represents love of humanity or something like that—and one end of it is so mussed and soiled that the poor child will have to have the whole thing cleaned before she can do anything with it. She made up the design and it's full of mystic stars and circles and whirls."

"Gosh," said Wendall.

"Oh, I'm going right over there now. I don't care. I am. Perhaps I can find out what Fleta is going to do when her aunt leaves. I'll just set my foot down in case she is planning anything——"

"Don't you mix in, Grace. Listen, Grace," he said, "I don't want you to go mixing in——"

"Good-by, darling." I simply ran across under the trees and up to the black screen door. I could see them inside by the big window. I called, "Hello, may I come in?" and burst into the hall. Wendall was waiting under the firs as if he expected me to come flying out to him again, but I waved the end of my cape and while I was doing it and making rather foolish love faces that he couldn't possibly see, Fleta came and took my hand vaguely. I couldn't help flushing and I felt ridiculous, standing there like a child. She didn't invite me into the living-room or do anything but stand holding my hand, her tiny pointed face back on her white shoulders, her ears showing beneath the waves of netted hair, and her large sad eyes and mute mouth close to my face.

"I was waving to Wendall," I explained. I felt like a child who has her handkerchief pinned on her dress in front.

She glanced out into the darkness. "Won't he come in? Is he outside?"

"No, he went home. I saw Vanessa run in and I just impulsively came too. Do you mind?"

"Not at all. Not at all. But will you amuse yourself with a book or something?"

"Oh, of course. But are you sure I'm not intruding?"

"Come," she said. "Oh, you have such a handsome husband. He is one of the best-looking men in town. I always notice him when he walks to the bridge sometimes with your little children."

I knew that my clothes were all right, that my hair was as nice as it can be made to look, and that I was completely all right from the outside. But as I watched her face, with the mute pity shining out on me, I knew that something inside me was wrong. I knew then that I was pathetic in a way I didn't even glimpse, that Wendall was handsome and pathetic and that the children were, too. There was something pitiful about us but I couldn't imagine what it was. I felt ragged and torn, like an angel who has been dragged like a muddy branch through wet gutters.

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"I'll sit down here," I said, "if you don't mind. I want to see this book. I've been looking forward to it." I sank down without glancing at Vanessa and I wondered what sad fate there was in life for us all, not in material things or circumstance, but inside us, something tragic that I couldn't name or fully believe in with my Christian optimism.

Suddenly I felt cold. I could see empty corridors and bleak entry ways and street-cars filled with people waiting to get off but never, never getting off. I could see trains with huge engines plunging through the country with no destination, the smoke pouring over green fields and blackening white houses and transitory cattle staring, their hoofs fastened deep in futile mud. I opened the book and bent over it as if I were deeply interested, but I saw only frightening machines and people standing in the rain without umbrellas waiting for something. I resented it because I don't believe in futility, questioning, but I had no mind of my own then. And my own eager face was gone and in my breast was that tormented mute pitying mouth with the large eyes above, the ears gleaming, and the crests of hair rising under the loose net.

"Father won't go to him," murmured Vanessa. "He says it won't do any good. He says nothing will do any good."

"I wonder."

"But Daddy says he's just as helpless as the other men in the company. He says they're all going to get done in, robbed——"

Fleta got up and went to the couch. She stood with one hand on the tufted arm and the other out vaguely in the air, the polished nails held together like the shining beak of a bird. "I know, I know, I know."

Vanessa raised her shoulders, her tranced head back, her high white forehead gleaming with little fine dangles of hair from her half-grown fringe. "Please show Aunt Grace your new picture, Fleta. I want her to see the little boy with the pail."

Fleta laughed. "No one really wants or cares to see my pictures." She smiled at me graciously and settled her lace in a cold, composed way, one grayed tooth caught in her lower lip. "They always ask what they are of."

"Oh," cried Vanessa, rising, her hands twisted together, "but you would be the one to understand that, Fleta. You would be the only one on earth to see how pitiful they are, not knowing what it all means, and not having an interpretation of life and a goal. Why, Fleta, how can you laugh? Why, you are the only one who understands about those things. I've never, never been the same since that time when the man who was selling coffee came in and looked at your abstraction and said, 'What's it mean?' and then just perspired and fairly groaned. Don't you remember? And you said that we all feed on the trampled empty husks instead of the golden ears."

"Good heavens, Vanessa, is it possible I said that? Grace, forgive me if I did. Vanessa, you forgive me too."

"But it's beautiful! It's noble!"

"Yes," she said tenderly, "and rather like a large gray goose."

"But you've never been this way before," said Vanessa slowly, in horror. "Oh, I want to go, I can't bear to be here, I want to go home."

Fleta caught her arm, laughing again, throwing back her head, her eyes half closed. "No, no, don't go. We're going to have some lemonade. Grace, you are an authority on cooking. Will you supervise this mixture? We want it to be good." She giggled then, looking me in the eye, and fastening up a strand of hair. "I am sure my lemonade needs supervision."

We went into the tiny kitchen and Fleta handed me the lemons. "I really ought to go home," I said. "I've been to a party."

"I thought you had been somewhere. You look extremely nice." She laughed suddenly. "I didn't mean it that way, Grace. Here's the ice but we mustn't make any noise on account of my aunt. She is sleeping just above." Then she and Vanessa stood looking out the kitchen door into the dark.

"Could a person if she tried real hard bring a great gift to all?" asked Vanessa in a desperate voice. "Could a person work and work and be worthy in time to serve humanity?"

"Yes, darling, I think so. You could. You can. No, you are doing it already."

Vanessa shook her head impatiently. "No, not yet, not yet. But the thing to do is to keep our eyes on the vision. We must work toward that end and toward seeing the hidden struggling part in every one. We must not see what we feel but what things really are and mean."

"Right, darling."

Vanessa gave a tremendous sigh, as if dimly she felt some restriction on herself after such a statement. She laid one hand over her burning cheek and slowly rubbed her tongue up and down on her large front tooth.

"How many lemons shall I use?"

"Oh, nine or ten. Four probably. As many as it takes. I really have no idea. Oh, have you seen how heavenly it is to-night, Grace? Why don't we all love one another until——"

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I dropped the knife. "Until we start singing together all over the earth, with our arms out and our heads up, shouting exactly like angels until God actually hears us."

"Well, I wouldn't care to have my arms out," said Fleta, "or my head rolled back. I think I could stand quite still and feel I was doing it just as well. No?"

"That would mean almost nothing to me."

"But what has the body to do with it?" she murmured, and when I started to speak she turned her back and pressed down the edge of the rug. "The sugar is in this little tub. I don't like mine very sweet. How about you, Vanessa?"

"What? Oh, I don't care for any. I'm not thinking about food."

"But you will take a glass if Grace goes to all the trouble of making it, won't you?"

"But you put in the sugar, Fleta, and it will be worth drinking."

"I like that," I said. "Thanks a lot. I just adore your pretty sayings, Vanessa."

"Don't mention it, Aunt Grace. You're all right."

They stood facing the darkness and Fleta suddenly said, "I wish your father would have a serious talk with Mr. Bope. There is something very exquisite there."

"Somehow he doesn't seem like the type that wants to work for humanity, though," said Vanessa.

"Perhaps none of us has ever seen him," she said gently. "Had you thought of that? You know we don't understand the slightest thing about each other."

"But *we* do, Fleta."

"Yes, we do."

"As soon as the ice melts and it's cold we can have it," I said. I put the pitcher on a tray and walked lightly for fear of waking that old witch up-stairs. But I had a feeling she would appear some time before our departure. We all sat down and suddenly Fleta pointed to a face on the magazine cover. She gave a horrid little laugh and said, "My, I'm glad I'm not married to *that*."

"Or this," said Vanessa turning it over eagerly.

"Or this thing that looks like a gorilla."

"Or this perfect bull."

"Or this rather sly gentleman in the hair-line stripe. Ugh, see those soft white hands and that mustache. Pretty awful, isn't it."

"Or this—or this—or this—or any one," said Vanessa, closing the magazine with a bang and crowding her fist down on it.

There was something puzzled and wilful about Fleta's expression then. She half smiled, then her lips moved as if she were about to speak.

I handed each of them a glass of lemonade. "How nice," they said at once. Then they sat down on the couch together and asked me about the party. "Who was there?"

"Mr. Bope," I said.

"Isn't it strange," said Fleta quickly, bending over her folded hands, the cold glass beside her on a small table, "isn't it strange that no matter what you paint it isn't ever the thing you meant to paint? It's never the great thing you think you are painting? *Never.*"

"Oh, yours, Fleta," cried Vanessa. "Oh, every one of yours is. I want to be a great painter like you when I see them. Oh, I feel as if I am a great painter just when I see that little boy with the pail. That meant everything to me. It means there's hope for something more than this materialism and viciousness and greed and dishonesty." She looked straight ahead of her, the light shining on her young face, her nose tilted, and those crazy fine hairs dancing on her grave forehead. "I am changed into something magnificent when I look at your pictures. But it hurts me," she said suddenly. "I hurt. I don't know why. I hurt." Now she turned her whole body to the woman. "Did you like Robert?" She snatched a book and began turning the leaves.

"Robert? Robert? Do I know a Robert?"

"Why, Fleta, you said he was nice."

"Not that little man with the brown eyes."

"Oh, *no*."

"Yes, I think I do remember—I think I almost——"

Vanessa walked over to the window in silence. I drank slowly. Finally she turned. "Do you think a person would be making—do you think a young girl, for example, a young girl would be making a big mistake in life, for example—" She rubbed her hand over her forehead as if she felt dazed at her own words. "Would a person be able to help toward a new world and marry too?"

"Some think they can," said Fleta. "People claim it can be done."

"What would your opinion of Robert be if some one asked you what you thought of him?"

"I think he's exactly what he appears to be—a nice lad. There's something rather exquisite there and fine, of course, but that's not enough." She sighed impatiently. "I'm so eager for you to get through wasting your time with young fellows like that who are merely nice, agreeable, and a few other things.

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He's not good enough for you," she said shortly.

"Robert is a darling," I put in quickly. "He's about the finest boy in the world."

"Yes, I know, Mrs. De Vries. But I suppose I'd think no man was good enough for Vanessa." She gazed at me for a second as if I had no place in their world. "You see I have always felt like her mother."

"You mean that I am better than Robert?" asked Vanessa slowly.

"My dear, don't let's talk about Robert. I'm not saying anything against the little chap. It's just that some day you will look back at the whole thing and laugh."

"Then you'd say I'm not in love?" she questioned. She stood there horrified and silent, her arms straight at her sides, her face toward Fleta.

"I would most assuredly say you weren't. Love comes like an eagle."

"An eagle," she murmured. She moistened her lips. "And do you feel sure night and day and all the time?"

"Utterly. And no one can influence you or change you. You are certain."

"If I could do it quickly without thinking—I guess if I marry I'll have to do it that way," she said wretchedly.

"Not if you're marrying the right person. Why, darling, you've years and years before you. Some day some one magnificent and remarkable will come and help you do all the things you're living for and must live for."

"I feel as if I want to be a wife when I'm with him——"

"Well, look around at a few wives. Look at the wives here in this town."

"A wife is like a bird," she cried. "They are beautiful—they are so—so——"

"Does Mrs. McGeehee look like a bird? Or Mrs. Bulgren? Have they done anything for the world by being just wives? It's all absurd because you don't know what you're likely to get into. You know nature does strange things with us if we aren't watching all the time."

I burst out laughing but they didn't look at me. I even said, "But that's our trouble. We're too watchful. We're either that or being watched." Fleta heard but she didn't look up.

Finally she said, "The lemonade is very good, Grace. And don't feel that I'm being personal. My talk sounds very rude indeed but you understand."

"I really don't," I replied but she took no notice of it.

"Would a young girl like me, or, I mean, any young girl," Vanessa began and raised her chest for a second, holding it until her frightened eyes fairly stood out of her head, "would a young girl who had my ideas and who married be likely to take to dope or drink if she married the wrong man and had her idealism destroyed in a single night, on her marriage night, for example," she added, flushing, holding her hand over her cheek again. "For example, if a man couldn't see the fine idealism in a young girl, would she be utterly destroyed from a single contact with him? What I mean is—do we become like the thing we love? Do we become base if what we love is base? Well, Leonardo said that in his note-book."

"My darling, it's just that I—" She burst out laughing. "You must excuse me, Vanessa, but I can't help laughing at the thought of you and that little fellow. Somehow, the thought of you with your fineness coupled with that little man——"

"There is something wonderful about Robert," she said as if it were an act of will.

Fleta sighed. "I don't doubt that. That is true of every one on earth. I'm not saying that he isn't a splendid little fellow for any girl in town. But for you—well, you know what I believe you are——"

Vanessa twisted herself to the side of the couch, dragging her fist across her eye, and then pounding it softly on her lap. Suddenly she drew up her breath with a great jerk of her chest and clinched her jaws, the tears starting out of her eyes.

"But we've had the crisis," said Fleta icily.

Vanessa did not move. Then she bent over her lap and stared at her thumbs, her lips closed tightly as if she were holding her breath. Sweat sparkled out under the little bunches of hair on her forehead and she bent lower, her arms gripped over her waist as if her stomach hurt.

"We're divided now. The way you acted about the cake. The way you told your aunt what I had said to you in confidence. But the pupil always rebels and then transcends the master. Why does the master always resent it so much and suffer over it? It's something to be radiant and grateful about, happier than you have ever been." Fleta's grayed tooth showed on the edge of her lip. She held her head firm, her fingers, with their long polished nails, feeling of one another forlornly. "You must transcend me, Vanessa. You must make me see how worthless I am and how—Oh, you must really be what my pictures will never be. You must be what I thought they were going to be. All my life I've seen something and believed in it and tried to paint it

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but it never, never came out that way and what I did—was always nothing at all. But, Vanessa, darling, you are the real thing and you are going to be happy—if you will do what I say."

The girl rose unsteadily. She put her hand up in one of those vague, helpless gestures, as if she were wiping webs off her face or felt amazed that her fingers could touch real flesh. She swallowed so that it jerked her whole body. Even her flowered dress looked mute with all the tiny blossoms on it and the broad velvet under her breasts. She tried to smile and then she glanced away, clinching one hand. Suddenly she knelt down on the carpet, gazing across at Fleta, her hands up, her face toward the woman. "Please tell me I'm not as good as Robert!"

"My darling child, don't be absurd."

"Tell me, tell me I'm beneath him—and every one—or I can't love—I can't—love——"

Fleta looked down at her fingers. "Perhaps you are beneath him," she said coldly. "Perhaps I haven't understood you. Perhaps you are just a girl like any other girl in this town or any other town and I'm just putting my own wishes on you. But I did see something. I *do* see it. There is *something,* Vanessa, I am sure of that."

"Really, Vanessa, it's time to go," I said. I got up feeling too angry and wracked to do or say anything important.

"I thought you had come to the place where you had escaped karma and where you could choose and live and be perfect without all these mistakes and sufferings and pointless tragedies and violences. But it may be you aren't ready and that in your inner self you feel that and are warning me not to harm you with my high conception. It probably means you aren't ready." She turned her face away, her cheeks grayed, her hands folded.

"Come on," I said. *"Vanessa!"* I plunged toward the door, my cape gripped around me. "I'm going," I muttered and tripped over the edge of a rug. Fleta turned and looked at me as if she didn't remember who I was. She stared for an instant, as strange as a bird with her small pointed face and her polished beaked hands. "Just a moment," she said. "I want to say something to Vanessa, if you will excuse me."

I went into the hall and stood by the big door. I was pounding my toe without knowing it and smoothing my hair in back and looking straight into a dark tiny glass above a table without seeing myself or knowing I was looking in at my blurred dark cheeks and eyes. Then I looked at the ceiling, calming my mind, staring at the empty flat space. Bending over the stairway was that figure I had expected to see. She wore an enormous gray flannel nightgown that had deep cuffs trimmed with pink tatting and a big quaker collar that met the full gathered top of the sleeves. Her bloodless ears showed below the strands of thin hair turned over rags and she held her lower jaw out, the lip drawn down so that the teeth shone grimly. I caught her eye. I knew then that she saw me, that she had been looking straight at me, and a shudder went down me through every notch in my spine. I bowed and muttered, "How do you do?" like a formula for the aged. I saw her clinched hands, bony and purple under the full cuffs, and then she shoved away in her long gray felt slippers with pointed ratlike toes. I sprang into the sitting-room, catching hold of the curtain, my lips drawn down and no breath in me.

Vanessa stood with her head forward, her arms at her sides, her eyes on Fleta. The woman was speaking while her mouth twitched and red lines came in little patches around it and under the eyes. Her hands were tightly clasped in her lap. She sat rigid, chin up, those little ears shining beneath the waves.

"If I have disappointed you, Vanessa. . . . Oh, of course I have disappointed you time and again. I'm not going to pretend that I haven't. But if I could only give you something in payment for all this. . . . Oh, could anything make up for my not being all you think I am?" She rose. "You don't even know that I've failed you." She was still rigid, looking straight into the girl's confused, frightened face. "But your love makes me feel very, very quiet, like sitting somewhere all alone and not thinking of anything, just closing my eyes."

Vanessa reached for a piece of paper. She moistened her lips and sat down on the floor before Fleta, a black thick pencil in her hand. She laid the paper on the bare floor and she drew quickly, her tranced face determined, her large eyes suddenly cold and strange. Now her jaws were clinched and she looked up quickly and then down at her paper, glancing impersonally, her arm moving as if all her will were in it. Once she seemed to shift her sight, as if there was a possibility of sudden confusion and defeat clutching her and making that hand tear it apart. Then she bent lower over her paper, her teeth pressing her lip, the wild little hairs on her brow swept together in damp tails.

I was standing in an uncomfortable position but I did not move, even though I was more

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and more aware of my leg aching and all the hornets of heaven and hell seemed suddenly to sting my heel. In my discomfort I saw for the first time that Fleta's chin wasn't firm, that soon the flesh would hang gray and soft like moss, and that it would shake as she spoke. I saw that her hair was thin and that she certainly tinted it. But all of this made her ravaged lovely face more beautiful than it had ever been, and the shine of her eyes, like something inside her looking out in fright and dismay, too strange to describe or try to understand. Then Vanessa jumped up and thrust her picture into Fleta's hand. She waited, her lips tight again as if she could not breathe until she heard the answer. Suddenly she clasped her hands before her as Fleta does, lifted her face, and with indescribable earnestness and pain said distinctly, "Am I a great artist?"

A strand of hair had fallen over Fleta's face. She did not hesitate. "Yes," she said with determination.

I went toward them. I looked over Fleta's shoulder at the drawing. It was made with many short blurred lines, some of them redrawn and not erased. It was sharp and almost piercing. But somehow it was Fleta even though Vanessa thought she had drawn an angel, a beautiful bare face shorn of experience, shining mildly from the eyes and the too delicate, lovely lips. It was really Fleta and in one corner was a great smudged print of Vanessa's thumb, like the definite earthy seal of her will. Or perhaps I put this into it. Did I see from the eyes that were drawn rather crookedly under the brows, Fleta's look of fear, as if sin were all about her and the way of life would change her from a pearl to an empty trampled husk if she reached out with her body toward the real sun, the real flesh of man that brings us whether we care for it or not, to what we are, to our real selves?

Fleta looked at me. I remembered suddenly that she hadn't asked me for my opinion of the sketch. She looked into me. She did not move. Then she said, loving the universe with her eyes as if we were all clasped together, "Help me take care of her!" And I cried out in a different voice, with different eyes, holding my body firm and restrained, feeling my blood and bones vanish, standing like a wraith, an empty cherub, "I will. I will."

VII

Belle and Edwin couldn't see anything in the picture that even dimly resembled Fleta. When Vanessa had left the room Edwin said it was a shame not to be able to nourish the budding genius in one's own child but that he, for one, had the spirit of truth in him and a social spirit as well that would prevent him from ever urging her to paint or draw. Belle was hurt and worried over it. She insisted that it wasn't as bad as Edwin made out and that she did see something in it but not very much. They both looked so worried that they made me feel slightly deranged. But I liked that sketch. Perhaps it was because I knew how Vanessa felt when she doubled her fists over her chest and bent over her paper with a torrent in her that held all her parts together in agony and awe as she drew.

Edwin held the drawing off and took out his pencil, pointing to the bird hair, the serene brown cheeks and mouth. "God," he said, "I'm afraid Vannie's painted a picture of what she's going to become. That's why it worries me such a lot."

"Robert telephoned three times last night long distance," said Belle. "I didn't like to connect him with Fleta's but I suppose I should have done it."

"Yes, you really should," I said, "but it wouldn't have done any good."

"Now if Vannie is going to start in painting those damned bowls of flowers, and those pots of daisies and sad pansies for women's magazines, I swear I'm going to do something desperate." He walked up and down in front of the fireplace. "You know a man can't stand everything. But I've had every kind of bitterness and failure a man could have. Lord, I know every hour of the day just what kind of failure I am."

"Don't be selfish," said Belle. "Please, Edwin. Now *don't!*" She went over to him and took the sketch out of his hand. "I'm going to put this away."

"I wouldn't do that," I said. "Vanessa will be insane if you do. Don't say anything about it except that it is interesting."

"Interesting!" said Edwin. "Good Lord, woman, won't it be interesting if she starts in copying Fleta's pictures and turns out to be a childless, manless, lost— God," he repeated, and held his head.

"But Fleta does draw out of every one a perfectly radiant power of expression," I said. "Really. I have felt it too."

Edwin shook his head like a great bear and simply plunged out of the room. Belle said, "He's almost wild. I've had such a time with him. You know he had a talk with Mr. Bope and everything is going to be horrible. Imagine it. Our neighbor. I went to grade school

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with Pliny. Our pews were right together in church. He's our most dignified elder. You know that, Grace. But——"

"It isn't really dishonest," I said. "Wendall said it wasn't."

"But is it neighborly? He knows he could save Edwin and all the others but he wants to run the thing himself. He's putting in a lot of money and instead of buying us out he's just taking whatever we have."

"But the company is bankrupt, Belle," I said.

"What if it is! He's rich. Edwin said he was just as hard and hypocritical as he could be and Edwin outlined a plan to be used so that every one would be saved but he just laughed at it. Oh, when I think of getting up in school with Pliny and reciting together and then being so near him in church—I can't think—I don't know *what* to think."

"I know," I said, "I know just how you feel."

Vanessa came down with her hands full of papers. Apparently she had been drawing every second of the time since she left Fleta the night before. She shook them in my face and I saw a series of older angels, their cheeks filled in with sooty smudges and their large eyes staring out of the blank paper. But even in that glance I could feel something alive in them, as if in Vanessa there was something so extremely alive that it flooded the lines she drew, even the uncertain ones, with a kind of immediate livingness. They were almost as good as Byron's and Myrna's, and when I say that I am paying Vanessa a compliment, because everything my children make on paper, and I don't care what any one says, everything they make is alive, and if they make a tiger it does roar out of its crayon cage, or if it is a princess stepping along on frozen glass toes you can actually hear the little gusts of sighs coming from the blue velvet bosom.

"Darling," said Belle, "I thought you promised to clean your room this morning."

"Can't, Mother. Sorry. But I'm going to take these to Fleta. Look how many I did!" she cried.

"Oh, please stay at home for this once and help me with the cleaning. Please, Vannie."

Vanessa opened her lips. She looked outraged and pale, her eyes seared around the lashes as if she hadn't slept in weeks. "Mother," she said sternly, "you may not know it or care but I am a great artist. I am greater than you even imagine and— Oh, I can't help it if you don't understand— I can't help what you and Daddy think of me or the low things you have in mind for me to do. I am *determined!*" she cried.

"Come on, I'll take you around," I said. "I have the car this morning. Come on."

"Are Byron and Myrna out there?"

"Of course," I said. "Come on. She'll be right back, Belle," I promised.

"I wish Daddy and Mother *could* understand."

"They're horribly worried."

"Well, Aunt Grace, I think I'd forget material things if I had a child who was going to be great. I know I would. I'd simply worship that great talent and give my life toward furthering it, because think what a great artist can do for humanity."

She didn't speak again until we got to Fleta's and then she ordered us to wait and not to move. "And don't bring Myrna and Byron in even if she invites you," she insisted. I had to giggle and she laughed a little herself, rubbing one smudged hand over her eye.

But Fleta was at her bedroom window and she called out to us to come in, and when she saw Byron and Myrna she leaned out and made noises to them like a bird. They flapped their arms and hopped up the walk before I could pretend we had to go to the market.

"Now, it's going to be just hideous," said Vanessa. "Those children always spoil everything. You don't mind my saying this, Aunt Grace," she said, and took hold of my arm warmly. "I love them of course when I don't give them a thought. You know how it is."

"Some time," I said, "I shall be really angry without being able to help it when I suddenly remember all these insults to my darling children."

"Oh, no you won't," she said carelessly, "you're sensible. You know too much to do that."

"Hello!" cried Fleta.

I am sure she was fresh from her meditation and Yogi breathing because she looked all loosened and moist around the face, dewed about the eyes and mouth. She kissed the children on the hair and Myrna put up her hand instantly and felt of the spot. We stood together in the doorway and Vanessa, waiting for more privacy, held the papers behind her.

"And do you want another picnic soon?" asked Fleta, kneeling to them.

"No," said Byron, "I hurted my toe."

"I'll make you another princess," said Myrna. "I'll make you one with longer hair and flowers and a castle. I can."

"Oh, Auntie, dear," called Fleta, "have you seen that little book of mine called 'A Light on

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the Pathway'? I want to loan it to Mrs. De Vries."

"I can't keep track of all your crazy books," she snapped. As she swept past us I got the odor of crackling singed flesh, like a fowl, and I saw instantly Vanessa's horrified description of those bony arms held out over the gas.

"I shouldn't have left it around," said Fleta. She gave her sad little laugh. "I'm so sorry, darling."

"Say, all I want is for you to quit puttin' me in the wrong with your nice talk."

Fleta gasped. Then she smiled, turning to us. "Isn't it strange that with all our discipline and effort we are likely to grow more selfish? I mean this. It's never right to even be kind if it makes some one else appear to be in the wrong. Isn't that true?"

"I've told you six times now, Fleta Bain, that Oxford is calling you long distance."

"Oh, excuse me, please."

"May I wait, Fleta? Would you have time to see something?"

Fleta paused. Something strange flashed across her face. She caught her lip for a second. "I don't believe so to-day, darling. Some other time. I'm so busy. Good-by, every one."

Vanessa choked and then she rushed down the steps, her head lowered, and ran toward the car. I caught hold of Myrna, who was following Fleta to the phone, and I heard the beloved auntie say, "Might better be at her painting making money instead of dragging all the young 'uns in the town over to ramp on my rugs."

Fleta had the receiver to her ear but she turned. "Darling, I'll buy you some beautiful new ones. Hello, hello, hello. I *must* have it this afternoon. I'm leaving town."

I opened the screen and pushed the children out on the porch. Fleta called again to her aunt. I heard—"some lovely new ones, darling," and then her aunt replied, in a tone calculated to reach the river bridge, "Well, they'll all turn on you in payment for your sympathy. You see."

We simply huddled together and hopped down the walk as fast as we could, feeling rather guilty and strange. Even the children lowered their heads and got into the car without saying a word. Vanessa was in a corner, cold and lost, crowded against the plush. I got in without speaking and we drove away. That evening I went out on the porch for the paper. Jackie Gunsaulus usually rides his wheel up the bank and it's cutting a deep rut in the lawn. I thought I had caught him this time but the paper was folded in a packet and laid in the mail-box. I went inside with it and sat down by the table. I remember fixing some flowers that had come out of the water and were drooping down on the scarf. Then I leaned back. I read almost at once: "To-day, at the home of Miss Clavira Weir, 512 East Eleventh Street, was solemnized the marriage of Miss Fleta Bain and Mr. Pliny Bope, prominent citizen and owner of the local gas works."

I read it again. I walked into the kitchen and put on the kettle. I always do that mechanically when there has been an accident. I reread it. I glanced at other things in the paper and went back to it. Even yet it didn't seem like news and I couldn't connect it with Fleta. I read it for the fourth time but my mind wouldn't clamp over it and make meaning. It stayed apart, hanging like veils above the substance, refusing to mix and change. Very rapidly I caught up our old Persian with the long white eyebrows and whiskers, and washed his face with my handkerchief. Then I took him back to the kitchen and made him a big dish of corn bread, bits of cold bacon, and cream.

"Well, this is something like it," said Wendall when he came home. He carried the paper at arm's length, simply beaming at me. "It's about time. So that's what was happening and we didn't catch on."

"I don't know what is going to happen to Vanessa."

"The best thing in the world for Vanessa. Positively. You know that yourself."

"But she's going to suffer so much, Wendall," I said. "I—I—hate to even imagine what she will have to go through."

"Nonsense, she'll get over it. She'll come through it a lot better than to keep fastening and growing on to that starved woman. Fleta's better off too. But, Lord, I can't imagine it. It certainly does give a man a jolt to think of it." He opened the paper and read it aloud.

"I'm not feeling very well," I said.

I hurried into the bedroom. In some way I felt connected to Vanessa and it was as if at that instant she had seen the paper. Something inside me moved. I lay down on the bed and when Wendall came I said, "Really, darling, I feel as if I'm going to lose the baby."

My eyes felt strange and then it seemed as if everything inside me was pushing out. I felt so frightened that I caught hold of him, half moaning, and he said over and over, "Never mind, it's nothing, nothing. Just lie down, darling, lie back. That's right. That's right."

I let my head sink down and suddenly I

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started to cry and I can swear to you that it wasn't myself that was crying. It was nothing that I knew as myself. It was as if Vanessa lay inside me in all her youth, cold, pale, without breath, waiting, waiting for an unearthly torrent of grief to wrench her apart with scalding pain. Just for a second she lay inside me instead of the child and I felt somewhere a terrifying burning light that springs up from the bowels of the earth, through feet, body, and then in the last gasp of consciousness, pours like a silver stream out the mouth. "Oh, Christ," I cried aloud and vomited, strangling and crying, my head limp and pale, his face so close that I breathed in his breath through my acrid sour nostrils. "I'm better now," I said. "I feel all right now. I'm better. Please get me a drink——"

I went to Edwin's the next morning and they were all in the dining-room eating breakfast. Belle had on a blue morning dress and she looked thin and as if she hadn't slept. Edwin was scowling, his eyes set off on something far away. I tried not to look at Vanessa. I tried to ignore her and ask Belle how she was feeling, but suddenly I saw her. She glanced at her mother mutely, as if partially dumb, her eyes straining wide in her face. She had a round comb in the front of her hair and all the little funny fringe was held back in the teeth. Her blue sweater had a round neck and there was something so tender about her skin there under her throat. She looked at me for a second and then at her father, then she glanced at her plate, moving her eyes as she looked at the knife and fork, the spoons and goblet. She picked up her knife and then she laid it down, staring at it as if she was trying to remember something. She examined a place on the spoon and then laid it down, shoving it back and forth on the cloth, her forehead drawn so that her brows met. She moved her head to the side as if in that position she might remember something she had forgotten.

Edwin poured syrup on his cakes and finally said, cutting off a mouthful, "Well, Fleta's played her last card I see. Got married at fifty-one."

"Yes," murmured Belle. "Amazing, wasn't it."

"Well, one thing, she won't paint any more of those God-awful pansies," said Edwin. "We're going to have some compensation in that. No more pansies or verbenas or trailing arbutus for the delicate-minded."

Vanessa did not move. She selected a warm cake and buttered it, with stiff definite movements. Then she cut off a small piece and put it into her mouth, chewing slowly, her eyes ahead, all serene except for the way her eyebrows met above her nose, as if she were trying to remember.

"Bope's good for ten years more but his love of money has made an old man out of him. That barracks he lives in is no better than a hotel. Every damned room in it is like a furniture store."

"I'm feeling rather strange about it myself," I said.

He turned to Vanessa almost savagely. "Now you can see what it is to own your own soul for a change. This is a lesson to you to always own yourself and be yourself and run yourself and not be afraid of anybody or God or the devil. I'd thank you for the sugar, Belle." He ran his fingers over his lips and swallowed.

"Don't let's get into an atmosphere now," said Belle.

"What about?" asked Vanessa.

"Please excuse me, Belle. Belle, I am asking you to please excuse me," said Edwin harshly.

"Dear, order that white paint as you pass Dowling's. Will you?"

"All right."

"Vanessa," I said, "won't you come for a little ride with me? I'm going out to the farm for eggs."

"Run along, dear," said Belle. "Please go with Aunt Grace."

Vanessa looked at me and then she glanced away. She looked at her mother and the table and the garden. "I don't believe I'll go this morning, Aunt Grace," she said.

"Oh, darling, come on," I urged.

"Yes, Vanessa, it will do you good."

"I think I won't go, Aunt Grace."

"Now you'll hurt my feelings if you don't. You really will this time."

She got up from the table and went out of the room. We heard her slowly climbing the stairs. I didn't see her again until the following day. I rushed over with a cake I had baked for Belle and I met Edwin in the garden. He was stone gray around the mouth and his clothes looked too big for him. He stooped as if already it was too hard for him to hold himself erect and when I asked him what was wrong he said, "Oh, nothing more than I had expected all along. Bope has done us all in. I can't go into the new company without mortgaging my home and I won't do that. I've worked all my damned life and here's what I get. Lord, I know now that there's a heaven

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because there must be some place where justice is. And it isn't on earth, so it must be in heaven." He looked at me coldly, as if he had forgotten I was his sister. He looked as if he hadn't a wife and a daughter and home and garden. He ground his teeth and then he turned his back. I ran away from him into the kitchen.

The dishes were standing on the table and there were some soft papers rolled together in a ball that they had used for cleaning off the food. The tea-kettle was steaming violently and the dish-pan was in the sink with the goblets soaking in the suds. There was a great soapy clot on the towel that looked as if some one had wiped her dripping bubbly hands hurriedly. I went on through the pantry and dining-room to the living-room. "Belle," I called, "it's me."

I opened the door into the sitting-room and I saw Belle leaning against the wall, her face bleached with shock, and her hands pounded against her blue work dress. The whole room was still and stark and cold. Vanessa stood near the piano, her arms at her sides, her face staring ahead. Just from the way she stood I knew that her mind could not hold for long the consciousness of her pain. She breathed quickly in a little sharp gasp when she saw me and lowered her face, as if now all the force and terror of her grief had passed into her bones, stretching them apart, filling her flesh; then suddenly her body was not large enough to hold it and she fell on the floor.

"Get some water, Belle. Vanessa! Vanessa! Quick! Oh, open your eyes! Water, water, please, quick, some water. Darling, oh my little girl, please, please . . ."

VIII

Clackie Weir didn't come inside the church again that summer. She didn't ever wear her gay frightful hat with the Christmas-tree cherries and the tufts of cotton and lavender candy-box ribbons. Every one in town had a passion to call on her about two weeks after Fleta's wedding and at first she opened the door to them but later she never went down, no matter how hard or how long they rang. Mrs. Gunsaulus said, "Well, how'd she know I wasn't a telegram that her sister died." But nothing brought her to the door. She worked around her nasturtiums by the elm tree, her gingham bonnet with the starched cape hiding her face, and the only mention of Fleta that she made to any one was, "Living in the same house with that saint put a strain on every organ in my whole body."

One day I saw her in the drug-store giving Eddie Jevens a lecture because the gall-bladder medicine she took had been raised ten cents a bottle. "I don't mind paying, you understand," she said, "but it's being held up that I object to. I can't help myself. I have to take it or leave it. How do I know whether that's the real price or not?" She stopped buying her medicine. Mr. Jevens told us that she had been getting it for the last fifteen years and now she stopped. She dug up all the pansies. She didn't even go to the door when the minister came.

But as soon as Fleta came back from her honeymoon the Bope car was at Miss Weir's door every day. The Bope cook carried in pails of soup, baskets of cooked food, and Fleta brought even chairs and flowers. I saw Fleta one morning just stepping out of the big car, her arms filled with flowered curtain material for her aunt. She caught her breath when she recognized me and then she came straight toward me, dropping the material and holding out her hand. The skin under her chin had loosened and fallen and she was very pale with dark deep circles under her large eyes. But she came toward me with adorable swiftness and put her hand into mine. "*How* are your little children?" she asked. Now she came close to me, standing with that same composure, as if there were no time. Her eyes, above the ravaged cheeks and delicate strange lips, still held their pity and fear of sin. Then she smiled enchantingly. "Byron and—is it Myrna?" she said. "How are the tigers? Has she made a new princess for me? I do love those glass slippers she makes them wear and the castle in the background. Don't you love a castle? Except for the labor involved and the exploitation of workers. But I think they are *nice*," she ended and smiled a little sad smile. "I see you are hurrying along in the other direction, Mrs. De Vries, and I am keeping you. Are you well?"

"I am very well," I said, "very well indeed, thank you."

"Oh, that's splendid. But aren't we all well no matter what we think? Isn't wellness in the head, Mrs. De Vries? Isn't youth in the head, too? I'm *sure* of that now."

I nodded and she gathered up her materials and stepped up the walk on her high-heeled satin slippers with large steel buckles. She wore a pale green georgette gown with very short sleeves and a transparent slip that revealed her young-looking calves and hips. It was a strange costume for morning but when I remembered her bunched, tight-belted atrocities, her waists of commonplace material, I

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felt glad. She turned when she reached the porch and called back to me, "Your hair looks so lovely in the sun, Mrs. De Vries. I'm just standing here and loving it."

I was very much aware of her not mentioning Vanessa. I think she was aware of not speaking of her too. And around her mouth had been a new expression, not the worn compassionate delicacy of her lips but a hard, almost pert wilfulness that matched her short skirt and transparent slip. She had run into the house with that light but determined air, practical and yet appearing to accomplish nothing and to have no purpose beyond leaning toward either the rising or the setting sun, one palm over her cheek, muttering, "Aren't we all brothers, aren't we all one?"

Vanessa was staying at my house because Edwin and Belle wanted to get her away from the rather bitter atmosphere at home. They felt too defeated and sad to keep up appearances and they didn't want to saturate her, and perhaps mark her, with their own hopelessness just then. So she spent her week-ends from college mostly with me. That evening some of our friends were in the living-room with us playing bridge and Vanessa was sitting near the window, her fingers on the curtain, staring out at the dark bushes. The men were laughing and the room was filled with cigar smoke. Suddenly the telephone rang. I went. It was Fleta. "I want to speak with Vanessa, please," she said.

"Of course, Fleta, I'll call her."

I went to the door. "Vanessa," I said, "Fleta wants to speak to you."

She did not move. Then she crowded herself down in the chair, gripped the arms, and shook her head.

"Why, Vanessa," I cried, "she's waiting."

She did not answer.

"Oh, come and just say hello," I begged.

She shook her head, her lips drawn together.

"But you must, Vanessa!"

She half raised herself in the chair with the effort to speak. "I can't."

I went back to the telephone and somehow Fleta's voice reminded me of that time when her aunt shut the door in our faces. I could see perfectly Fleta's eager pointed face at the front window, waving with pitifully forced composure at us.

"Oh, Fleta, are you there?" I said. "I'm so sorry but Vanessa will call you later. She's—she's—washing her hair and can't very well leave."

"Oh, don't bother her, Mrs. De Vries. Tell her it was nothing. I just thought of her and I wanted to say hello."

"I'm sorry, Fleta."

"Good-by," she said sharply and before I could put up the receiver she said, "How are the children? I'm so glad. And yourself? Splendid. And, Mrs. De Vries, tell Vanessa she needn't bother to call me. It was nothing at all important."

Vanessa was sitting forced down in her chair. When I came into the room she pressed her palms over her eyes. Then she said, "Oh, I loathe her, I hate her, I don't care if hating her keeps me from God, I don't care if it makes me go to hell, I'll keep on hating her and loathing her and knowing that I'm going to hell for it, too. I'll keep on forever, I'll never give up hating her."

"Well, I do think Fleta should have told Vanessa she was going to be married," said Evelyn in her casual voice that makes any strong emotion seem ridiculous. "I really do. What kind of hand have you, Art? Good. No, I really do. I think after Vanessa had been so intimate with Fleta, like a daughter and all that sort of thing, that she might have told her."

"I didn't want to be told," said Vanessa.

"Of course you did," said Evelyn. "If she'd let you stand up with her everything would have been all right. I was really quite surprised. Every one was. We all thought she was—I mean we all knew she must be devoted to you, Vanessa."

"Oh, yes?" drawled Vanessa.

"Sit down with me and help me play," I said.

She burst out laughing. "Did you know that she wears green georgette now in the morning and satin slippers? That's to attract her saviour of humanity with."

There was a shocked silence.

"She tells lies," said Vanessa. Her handkerchief was rolled into a ball in her hands and she kept scraping her lower lip with her teeth so that the veins in her neck stood out. "She sent every one in town a card with Whittier's birthplace on it—but me." She laughed and opened a magazine on the table. She stared at me as if she had been mumbling in her sleep and then her expression changed and she clinched her hands in front of her and said, "I don't care if I rot in hell. I don't care if I never can love again or paint or draw. I would rather hate her than ever be happy again. If hating her means that I shall be separated always from—from—humanity"—she brought out with a choke—"all right, I don't care, I'll hate her until I die no matter what the price is.

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And she knew all the time what Mr. Bope was going to do to Daddy and she didn't make one move to stop him."

"Oh, I have a lovely joke," said Evelyn. "Perfectly lovely since we're being low. My cook heard that Fleta and Mr. Bope used to spoon under the lamp every evening and the people next door saw them—isn't it killing—and so now they sit in the dark for hours. Can you *imagine* it? Those two." She broke into laughter, covering her mouth with her hand. Then she took out her handkerchief and wiped her lips, breaking down again when she met Arthur's eye.

I looked at Vanessa. She was biting her lip and staring down at her fingers. She was feeling of them forlornly, holding them in the same tender way Fleta always held hers, knocking and smoothing the long nails. When she saw me looking at her she began to laugh.

"Make us something to drink," I whispered to her. "The oranges and lemons are on top of the ice-box."

"What?" she said.

"Come here."

"Sorry. Awfully sorry, Aunt Grace, but I'm going for a walk. Bye, every one." She stood still with one hand up in imitation of a gay little casual farewell and then that sound came from her lips. It raised me out of my chair. Evelyn turned. The men looked down at their cards. It came as if she didn't know it was her voice, like my own that time in the cemetery when my mother was being lowered into the ground. I sprang out of my chair and went to her. For a second it seemed as if she could not move. Then she ran swiftly out of the house.

"Excuse me a moment," I said.

She stood near the banked bridal-wreath that hung in those soft white ropes, curved down to the dark grass. She had her hands in the cool faces and leaves and her head was lowered so that her hair swept down over her cheeks. Far in her throat, deep, as if it came from that same place where all those startling cries of labor come from, she was murmuring, "O my God, O my God, O my God, O my God, O my God," all in the same tone, eyes closed, hands out mutely.

"Darling," I said, "oh, please don't ever talk in front of Evelyn. Just Wendall and me. Please. They don't understand. Please."

It was very still. She moistened her lips and opened her eyes, lifting them to me, still with that angelic adoring look she unconsciously had when she gazed up at any one. "I don't believe what I say about her but I can't stop."

"But you must!"

"I can't. I want to go out and tell the whole world. I want to tell every one on earth. I want to spend my whole life telling them that she is a loathsome, damnable, despicable—liar." Then she clasped her hands in front of her and looked quickly all around, drawing up her breath. "Oh, Aunt Grace, but what if she isn't —what if she really *isn't*——"

I heard a great peal of laughter from the house and Evelyn's high scream. Arthur was simply howling and then there was the sound of cards being shuffled, like little sharp gunshots.

"We're waiting for you, Gracie," called Marshall.

"Coming," I said.

"I think I'll go around and see Daddy," she said. Again she lifted her arm stiffly, her face turned away from me, and said, "Bye."

IX

One morning I found Vanessa in the garden picking flowers. She had a great pile of phlox that she had brought over from her house and she was cutting my white daisies and some delphiniums. "You don't mind, do you?" she said. She sat down on the grass and dropped the garden shears into her lap.

"Why didn't I go to the telephone?" she said. "Oh, I couldn't."

"Put in some of the baby's-breath, it looks charming with the phlox."

"I couldn't move, I *couldn't* have spoken." She bent her head and then she pulled on my arm, "Aunt Grace, when I woke up this morning I could feel her breathing and I was breathing and every one else in the world was. I'm going to take her some flowers."

"Well, that's nice."

"I kind of hate to go alone," she whispered, "I'm so afraid I'll meet those hateful girls. I just loathe them."

"I'll take you over," I said. "I promised Fleta some of those large lily-of-the-valley bulbs. I hate having them mowed down every time the grass is cut and there are a lot spreading out from the bed."

"And do you think it looks all right to take these?" She gathered them together and looked at me over them, her eyes very earnest and sad.

"It will be lovely. Come on. I'll take you right over."

We went around to find the spade so that I could get the bulbs but Wendall had set it away somewhere. So I told Mrs. Weston to take the children for a walk and we started.

"Suppose some one wronged some one she

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loved very much and would die under a car to save but she couldn't be sure what the person really was and so she changed all the time and said horrible things—could a person make it all up in time to the person she had wronged?" She looked into my face eagerly. "Could she? Do other people?"

"You know what they say about time," I said. "Time heals all wounds and all that sort of thing. We forget after a while."

"But do *they* forget? No, Aunt Grace, I can't take these flowers to her. I'm not worthy to give her anything. Really." She put them in the back seat and sat rigid. "I have no right when I spurned her gracious advance toward me. Oh, why when I knew how she loves humanity, why did I have to hurt her like that, just like her horrible aunt was always doing. Oh, when we went on picnics she always looked up at the hospital and wondered if the people inside were feeling sicker because we were having a good time."

"And then what," I said, "what did you do then?"

"But she always decided that they would enjoy it more and be grateful that we were out there having a good time even if they couldn't be."

"Well, that was optimistic of her," I said.

"Oh, Aunt Grace," she said and put her hand over her mouth.

We got out and went up the steps to the porch. I rang. A very severe-looking maid with a boil opened the door. "Mrs. Bope will be right in. Won't you sit down?"

The room looked as if the furniture had been pushed into every conceivable position to make the place seem more livable and intimate. A little stiff table had been pulled against a large remote armchair and over the fireplace hung one of Fleta's flower pieces. Vanessa went straight up to it and gazed. She turned to me, her eyes filled with tears, and shook her head, as if she could not speak. "You see everything she does," she brought out, "everything is a gift to people and how many of us can see what she means or the beauty in them?"

I couldn't look at the picture because I kept forgetting I was looking at it. I saw the lamps. She was filling it up with lamps. They stood there, lonely and ornate, sending out their futile light on the imitation mosaic, the early American desks, Tudor walls, and Florentine leather. But I kept seeing Fleta directing the rearranging. I kept seeing her with that measureless love of harmony and quiet, that passion to be happy and exclusive, ordering the imitation tapestry to be hung on the east wall and then for a few hours feeling complete and at rest, as if it was all more wholesome and intimate now. Then another morning I could see her supervising the moving of the chairs, warding off the cold and empty spaces in that room by bringing in more lamps. I saw Fleta for the first time as uneasy in her heart, not sure of herself, incomplete.

"Can't you see how she *loved* these petals when she made them?" asked Vanessa. "You can tell. They are so warm and real."

Fleta came toward us. She looked at Vanessa and then she came straight toward me, holding out her hand. "How do you do, Mrs. De Vries?" she said. "Hello, Vanessa. Do sit down. I'm so sorry to have made you wait. Isn't it a perfectly heavenly day?"

"I am about to bring you some of those giant lily-of-the-valley bulbs you said you wanted."

"Well, how sweet of you, Mrs. De Vries. I shall put them in my garden."

Vanessa sat down. Beside her was a table with a huge leather Florentine box on it. There were two lamps behind her head. She moved uncomfortably and then folded her hands in her lap, gazing at the toe of her slipper.

"Have you been well, Vanessa?" asked Fleta, glancing at her.

I caught my breath. It grew still. Vanessa lowered her head, picking at her fingers, her feet rigid. She did not answer or move.

"How are your little children, Mrs. De Vries, little Byron and Myrna?"

"Oh, they're always well, you know."

"How fortunate you are."

I didn't know what to say next. I didn't know what Vanessa would say or do and so I looked around and smiled and said, "This is a lovely home."

"Yes, isn't it," said Fleta. "There's something so— Oh, as if one had dreamed it or imagined it when one was a little girl and full of anticipation."

Vanessa jumped up. "Fleta, why do I hate it?" she cried. "Why do I hope in my heart, all the time, so that it's eating me up, that this house will burn down or the roof will leak and spoil the ceilings?" She steadied herself now with her hand on the back of the couch. "Why do I feel glad you can't raise any flowers?"

"Oh, my darling, but look at them!" she cried and threw open the French window. "I *can* raise flowers."

They stood in straight rows, in full bloom, newly transplanted from a greenhouse. Vanessa glanced at them and then she went over

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to Fleta. She stood in front of her looking up. "Would a person be able to make it up to some one she had wronged? Would she be able to give up her life to the person to make up for the violence and the betrayal? Oh, can it be done? Or doesn't the other person want it any more?" She opened her mouth and caught her lip with her teeth. "I thought I would always be with you and we would work to make humanity—better," she said.

"Sssssh," said Fleta with a delicious listening look coming over her face. "Listen. It's a whippoorwill," she whispered. "I heard him last night, too. Delicious." She drew Vanessa toward her. "Listen. Did you get it? Simply delicious."

"I don't think so," said Vanessa. "And it's a wren anyway."

Fleta laughed. "Well, let's talk about you then. We'll talk about Vanessa, Mrs. De Vries, shall we? I was coming to you anyway, darling, because I have a thrilling plan. You know, Mrs. De Vries, you always emphasized cooking and housework so much for Vanessa and I was wondering— Oh, would you do this, Vanessa? I wonder if I dare ask it or even suggest it? It would be so wonderful for me. And we'd have time to read together. I'm reading a history of oriental philosophy that is one of the greatest things since Plato, one of the most charged things I have ever touched. Exquisite. Well, would you consider coming here and helping me, darling? I told Ella that she deserved a month's vacation and I sent her away yesterday morning."

"Oh, now really, Fleta," I said, "that's not going to be possible."

She lifted her hand. "As an experiment? Just for the experience? Just to know? Well, why isn't it possible?"

"Would a person be able that way to pay back the evil he had done to some one he loved—loves—loved—thought he—really loves —would it be possible to show through devoted service——"

I was furious. "Fleta, I know Edwin and Belle would never let her come. I know that."

"But if it is going to develop her? I thought you were so enthusiastic about domesticity, Mrs. De Vries?"

"But I don't dare even think of telling Edwin and Belle. Not after what has happened," I said and looked into the fireplace. I couldn't meet her eyes. I felt horribly gnarled to even bring it into the conversation and I felt sure, at that moment, that Edwin had made up the story about Bope's hypocrisy and treachery to the others.

"I wanted to speak to you about that," she said. "You know Mr. Bope did one of the most generous things I have ever heard of. He didn't ask the members of the company to share his failure, he let them out, and he took the burden of reorganization and loss on himself. The night he made up his mind to do it Mr. Lewis got down on his knees in the meeting and prayed. He thanked God that some one was left in the modern world who would sacrifice himself for the people and who would be generous and brotherly." Her eyes filled and she pressed her handkerchief to her lips. Then she turned to Vanessa. "I know how ugly it looks from the outside but I know the inside of it and I see that Mr. Bope has done one of the most highly spiritualized things I have ever witnessed."

"I'll see that you get the bulbs," I said and got up.

"Vanessa, dear," she said, taking her hand, "think it over. Let's both be maids and wear caps and aprons and find out what we are making our sisters do. Let's!" She pressed her hands together as if she wanted to feel airy and gay and smiled enchantingly. "Let's."

"If a person could wipe away the guilt——"

"Nonsense," she said. "We don't know anything about guilt."

"I do. I have it. If a person could make right the awful wound——"

"But I have no wounds," she said, laughing, lifting her tortured, ravaged face. "I can't be hurt. Really. It's something I've worked on for a long time. No one can hurt me. I won't permit it. I'm so proud of it that I shall probably be punished for feeling satisfied."

Vanessa stared at her in the most infinite love and confusion, all the violence and resentment washed away, her eyes fixed on Fleta's face, her whole body leaning toward the woman's. Pliny Bope stood in the doorway.

"Ready, dear?" he said. "Oh, excuse me, I didn't notice you had guests." He came toward me, adjusting his glasses, his polished slender shoes sinking into the rug. He was safe and happy with a white piping in his dead-black vest. He put out his hand generously. "Well, how are you, Mrs. De Vries? It's mighty fine to see you again. How's Wendall? Well, well, isn't that fine. And here's Vanessa. How do you do, Vanessa? Don't you know me any more?" He went close to her, smiling graciously, and took her hand. "I'm so glad to see you here. You know I'm mighty nervous for fear Fleta's friends won't like me. And I want to measure up. Don't I, darling?" he

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said and laughed. "Of course I do. I'm mighty glad you came, Vanessa. Come often."

I moved toward the door, my feet ploughing over the rug, and Vanessa followed looking cold and strange. We came face to face with the Bope twins at the door, Jane and Julia. They were in blue with white hats and gloves. Vanessa deliberately pushed against Jane.

"My word!"

"Good heavens, you needn't shove us off our own porch, Vanessa Bodley."

"Oh, come in, daughters," said Fleta gently. She kissed them and took their hats off.

"My word. Mother, she acts as if this porch was hers."

"Ssssssssh."

"Come, girlies, let's forget it."

"Well, Daddy, I want twenty-five dollars."

"What for?"

"Well, I need it," she cried and flopped in a hall chair.

"Vanessa," cried Fleta, "Vanessa, darling, are we going to do it? Together?"

"I don't know."

"Say yes. We'll read and talk and find out more about life."

Vanessa whitened. Then she said slowly, "I want to come."

"Splendid. And shall I telephone your parents about it?"

"Please don't."

Fleta flushed and followed us out on the porch. "Oh, I hope there isn't any misunderstanding. I asked Pliny to speak to your father but he wouldn't. Naturally after doing what he has done he wouldn't want to. You know I've always felt that there was deep good in people that they simply couldn't show to the world and now I've seen it." She looked at us sadly and triumphantly, her large eyes suddenly earnest and grateful. "It makes me feel so silent."

"But, Daddy!" cried Jane.

"No, we're spending too much money. Our electric bill alone . . . Laundry . . . Telephone. I'm not made of money you know even if all I do is write checks. I tell you I've got to call a halt somewhere. I'm under terrific expense just now." He came out into the arched doorway. "Well, I'm glad to have seen you," he said. "I suppose I sound like an old miser moaning over my bills." He laughed. "This wedding trip wasn't done on any small scale, either, was it, darling? But it was worth it," he said boyishly.

She leaned toward him slightly, her eyes closing a little, and said, "Oh, *yes!*"

Jane and Julia came up behind him and jerked on his shoulders with their blunt fingers. "Well, Daddy, where do we come in?"

He swung round. "You spend a quiet day at home," he advised them.

"Then shall I send the car for your things, Vanessa?"

"Yes."

"Vanessa, Vanessa," I said under my breath.

"But if I can make it up to her," she whispered, "if I can wash away my guilt for the things I've felt and said. Oh, I feel like a Judas. I've betrayed her in front of those people and she has never changed toward me at all. Oh, when I think of what she longed for me to become and the way I repaid her. No, I'm going. I'm going to ask to scrub even."

"Well," I said, "if she is really in need of help I doubt if you will stay very long."

"This isn't practical, Aunt Grace. This is an experiment. This is my big chance to wipe away my sin and if I fail——"

"And look at all those lovely flowers," I said. "I can't see why after you'd picked them you couldn't have handed them to her."

She pressed back the hair from her eyes and laid one hand over her ear, looking off into the distance. "A person has to be worthy to give gifts. A person has to—" And then she threw her arms around me and cried, "Oh, when I'm purified, when I'm free from this remorse, oh, would a person then be ready to help humanity to a higher road?"

We got out at Belle's and I went in with Vanessa. Belle was ironing. Vanessa went up to her and kissed her ear. "I'll do the tablecloths," she said, "then I have to pack."

"Good heavens, *now* what!"

"Mama, you created me, of course, but she did too and I must be forgiven. Oh, when I die," she said, rolling back her eyes and laying her fingers under her chin, "when I'm dying I want to know that my soul is inside her and I am safe."

"Oh, for heaven's sake," said Belle. She heaved a deep hurt sigh. "All she wants to do is keep you on the rack. Let her alone."

"She wants to free me from this remorse and she took this way of doing it. There is a purpose behind it all."

"But what have *you* done to her?"

"Oh, why didn't I force myself to the telephone that night? Why have I told those dreadful things about her? Why? Oh, when a person possesses you one ought to feel it all and suffer and be happy and polite—polite—I'm not— Oh, I haven't politeness."

"What is this great guilt of yours?" I said.

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"Everything in me. Every word from any one brings up my guilt. I think all the time of how she must have suffered when I didn't understand and stand by the way a real friend does. I've just learned that. But I don't know her yet and I want to know her—all of what she is——"

"And she doesn't intend you to know her," said Belle. "She doesn't want you to because she's cruel at heart. She intends to keep every one on the wrack who ever doubted her for an instant and if you can't idealize her she won't notice you. She wants to be thought unselfish and good and if you don't do it she will punish you eternally, or just as long as you will let her."

"If I believed that with my soul I would go insane. I know—I know— Oh, I won't accept her as a sinner like me."

"Then you're very selfish."

She ran up-stairs.

"Oh, Belle," I said, "don't let her go. She's going to work for Fleta—housework. Please don't let her go. Oh, I'm going to find Edwin right away. Please, Belle, do something."

"What?" she asked.

"Something—anything—lock her up—anything——"

"I can't do a thing. Neither can Edwin."

"No, I suppose you can't," I said. "I suppose we have to let her go."

"Yes."

"She'd go anyway."

"Yes."

"Even Edwin couldn't do anything."

"No."

"Her own father."

"No."

X

"Darling, won't you arrange the flowers?" said Fleta the first day. And the second day she said, "Dear, there are some dishes to be wiped and poor Annie is so rushed." "Vanessa," she said on the third day, "Vanessa, would you put on a little cap and apron and answer the door?" And the fourth day she said, "Vanessa, would you make a cake? Why, dear, of course it will be good. You always made such delicious cakes. Of course it will be splendid. Come, I'm having guests and Annie has all the rest of the lunch to do. Come, brace up, and have faith in your powers. You can, of course you can, and I'll make one myself on Friday and we'll make it a contest."

"When—when are we going to talk about immortality?" asked Vanessa, pushing back the white organdy cap with the black bow on the side. "When are we going to be together and talk about time and space?"

"Well, on Friday I'm going to Chicago and Sunday I shall be home and on Monday we can surely have an hour together."

"I want two hours—I want more— Oh, I never see you——"

Fleta stiffened. Vanessa told me that she felt then as if she had been mercilessly greedy in asking for two hours. Then Fleta smiled and held out her hand. "Good-by, dear," she said vaguely, "I'm going to see old Gramma Hodges. I promised to take her some fresh spinach. Now *will* you take Auntie her soup this morning?"

Vanessa shook her head.

"Why not?"

"I don't want to go there now. I don't want —I don't like to——"

She said that Fleta sighed shortly and looked straight at her. "Good heavens, what difference does it make whether you want to or like to? If a thing is there to be done— Well, Vanessa," she said biting her lip, "if you could ever see— Oh, if just for once you could forget yourself and see the immortal—yes, the immortal soul of that woman you would never be able to even remember such superficial, material things as liking and disliking. All you see anywhere is yourself. Yourself."

"Oh, I don't like it here," cried Vanessa and ran to the back of the house. "Annie," she cried to the cook, "when is Agnes coming back, for heaven's sake. I can't stand it much longer. When is she coming?" she asked and balanced herself against the gleaming sink. "Tell me it's soon because I can't stand—this——"

"Agnes?" said Annie, turning, a large spoon in her hand. "Why, Agnes isn't coming back."

"Oh, I can't remember her crazy name." Vanessa rubbed her hand over her head. "I can't remember anything." Suddenly she went toward the woman and stood stiffly, her head laid against her large shelflike breast. "Annie, why is the road to spiritual fulfilment so hard? Why, oh, why, do we forget what others are and only know ourselves and our love and what we want? Annie, am I the only one that feels that way and wants so much just like a selfish monstrous animal that begs and begs to be loved all the time? Oh, who was that girl who was here—I can't even remember her name. The one before me."

"Her name was Agnes."

"Well, I thought it was."

"Agnes Feiss. She went home to Muirville."

"When is her vacation over? I can't hold out

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for more than two days longer. I wish I could go right now. Oh, I wish I could go to the tracks and lay myself down with my head on the rail and let the train come." She pressed her hand on her eyes and lowered her head.

"Agnes ain't coming back."

"I mean the Agnes who worked here as a maid. I didn't ever meet her but her name was Agnes."

"What did Mrs. tell you?"

"She said Agnes was so tired that she let her have a little vacation."

Annie shook her head, drawing the wind up through an empty tooth, and said, "Agnes went that day for good. She left her cold without an hour's notice."

Vanessa turned and ran out of the kitchen. She rushed up the stairs to her hot little attic room. She picked up a paper and wrote, "You *were* afraid of the cows that day. You try to make me think you are good but you tell lies all the time. You want me to work here because you don't really love me and you aren't doing it for my good. You are worse than the lowest on earth." She groaned aloud. "You are worse than an honest thief and an honest liar and an honest killer. You are a betrayer of ideals! Love from Vanessa." She erased it, sobbing in her throat, and then as she read over the note she rewrote it, "Love from Vanessa." She erased it again and put down, "Faithfully yours, faithfully always, I would die under a truck for you," and then she erased it and wrote merely "Vanessa." But in the corner she wrote in small letters, "If I have wronged you and if I am just seeing my own self, then I can't help it. I will suffer all my life for it. If I have misjudged you I think I will cut off my head." She folded it and crammed it into an envelope. Before she went to Fleta's room with it she wrote on the edge of the envelope, "You are gentle. I am rough. I can't help it." As she told it all to me later, she said that when she had written that on the envelope she stood still looking down at the table and she felt something in between her breasts crack. She pressed her hands over it and the pain pulled her down until her chin touched the bed and it drew her further, until her legs were drawn up and her face was on the bare varnished floor.

When she got up she said her mouth tasted like zinc and there was a kind of evil bubbling in her chest and her legs felt empty of blood and flesh. She stepped much higher than was necessary, as if the carpet was as thick as a stair step, and she laid the note on Fleta's desk. Then she went down and tried to make the cake with Swansdown cake flour and butter substitute. "Oh, Annie, could you help me cream this?" she said and ground the butter and sugar together, the bowl on the top of her knee. "Oh, it won't be good. I only made a few in my life and it won't be good." And when it was made she said, "I'll cover it with frosting and this soft torn part won't show." And when she had the icing on, it was so hard and sugary that she beat up some cream and simply threw it over the top and down the sides. "I wish I had some lovely flowers for a wreath," she said, and then she put it into the cupboard as quickly as possible and made sure that it was out of her sight.

Later Fleta came into the kitchen. She had on a white georgette gown with little capes on the shoulders that flung out behind her like wings and she had white slippers on her tiny warm feet and her hair was in a great mysterious net on top of her head with those fine ears gleaming beneath the waves. She simply ran to Vanessa who sat drooped on a kitchen stool and laid her cool hand on Vanessa's head.

"How warm you are!" she murmured.

Vanessa did not move.

"Come, let's sit on the porch for a minute and get you cooled off."

Vanessa bent over her knees, stiffened.

"Come. I have a new book by the author of 'A Light on the Pathway.' Come, dear. Oh, Annie, it's so warm, isn't it. I feel positively treacherous making you two stay out here in the heat. Why do we have to have parties and meals anyway?"

Vanessa looked at Fleta. Her lips parted and she gazed into the softened, benign face, the gracious partly opened hands. Then she suddenly lowered her face again. "Oh, you tell lies," she said stonily.

Fleta bent over her. "Lies?" she asked gently. "Did I ever tell *you* a lie?"

"Oh, I believe you do tell them, I know you do."

"When did I ever tell you a lie?"

Vanessa raised her face to Fleta without speaking.

"Well, perhaps, I sometimes do tell one to save some one else. Is that so bad of me?"

"Why do you try to make yourself out so good?"

"Sometimes we can only make others good by doing wrong or seeming to do wrong. Isn't it worth it, Vanessa?"

"But we must never *lie*," said Vanessa. "You taught me that."

Fleta drew her onto the little porch at the back. She looked into her face, pushing the

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damp hair back from the white forehead. Then she ran her polished forefinger over the end of Vanessa's small upturned nose and suddenly turned away. "Why are you always—always—so adorable?" she said, gazing down at the rows of phlox with their dank sour leaves drooping to the sod. "I've always been you—*you*—from the beginning. I've been through all of it with you." She raised her handkerchief and put it to her lips. "When you said those dreadful things about me I suffered because I knew how *you* would suffer over it later. . . ."

"I wrote you a note—" she cried, pushing her hand over her forehead. "You didn't read it—you mustn't—I want it back!"

"I did see a note on my desk but I haven't had time to read it, darling."

"Oh, thank God. Oh, Christ, thank you," she murmured and ran.

She snatched it off the table and flew to her room. She fell on the bed saying desperately, "What am I? What am I to have thought such things about her? Oh, when I'm so vile—so low—oh, I didn't deserve to have her understand and forgive me." Then she quieted herself and it seemed for an instant as she remembered that strange deep look of love on Fleta's face that all her guilt was gone. She chided herself then for the frosting and the torn places. She closed her eyes, letting her body relax on the hard hot mattress. "Forgive me for hating Jane and Julia. They too have immortal souls," she mumbled. Suddenly she sprang up and reached for the note to rip it into a million pieces with her teeth. She glanced down at the flap as she tore it apart. She pressed her finger over it. Then she took it to the light. She saw that it had been opened and resealed. She saw the wrinkles at one end, the thumb mark, and a drop of foreign glue.

XI

The day Vanessa went to Chicago to make her fortune she came to say good-by to us. It made me remember the day, the morning in September, when I had started off, my chest simply raised with the voice that I meant to send out into the world. I meant that voice to rush into every heart, every head, every body, and make them all new. I meant it to make singing, gorgeous deep notes and cries of pain and joy in all who heard. Then I imagined as I stood on the platform with my mother and Edwin, that all the plain little strapped trunks, some of them bound with ropes, held the souls of those very people who had packed them, and I imagined the ropes bursting off, the locks flying open, and those stern cold teachers stepping out into the light of day. I seemed to kiss the trunks as they passed, all loaded on a truck, a man with a bent back and black face pulling them and glowering ahead at the coal yards. I remember thinking, "You too. I shall sing for you. You will sing for me. And all over the world, all over the earth, we shall stop and sing together."

Vanessa had done up her hair. She wore a new suit that she had made and part of the bastings were still in the hem. I made her stand over near me and I pulled them out. She looked at me sternly.

"Now, Aunt Grace," she said, "I hope you aren't going to go on and on having these babies all the time. Really, I think this one is going to be enough."

I laughed. "I want to populate the earth with singers," I said.

"Well, it's too bad Byron and Myrna haven't contributed anything yet in the way of superb voices," she said. "Of course in time they may. Well, I hope they do and I'm going to send them each something nice from Chicago." She repeated Chicago with her head back and her eyes raised. She made a soft sweet sound in her throat, rather sad but full and deep, and then she clasped her hands over her breast and said, "If tragedy contributes to one's understanding and makes one better able to help humanity, then—then—I guess I don't mind what I've been through——"

"It does," I said, "of course it does. And you're going to—" but I couldn't finish. She turned to me with that quick earnest look. I couldn't go on and say—"you're going to do great things in Chicago, Vanessa"—I couldn't.

We stood there awkwardly and then she said, "I want to ask you a question, Aunt Grace."

"Yes, of course, dear, of course."

"No, this is a hard one. I want the truth." She bent for a second to look down at her shoe and she pressed her toe over the little block of deep red in the rug. "Oh, do you think it would turn out that another—another man will fall in love with me, Aunt Grace?" Now she looked into my face. "Could any one else be in love with me some time?"

"Of course, of course. Oh, yes, darling, yes, yes. . . ."

"I hope I never see Robert again. Fleta spoiled Robert for me. He never looked the same after she said that—after she called him 'a nice little fellow' in that funny voice. I hope I don't ever see him."

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"But perhaps you're different now—both of you."

"Yes, I'm different." She looked at me with that scared appealing face. Then she put her cheek toward my lips. "I guess I'd better go now," she said. "I just wanted you to see my suit. You've been in Chicago and you can tell if I'll look all right there."

"Oh, you do, darling. You look lovely—lovely——"

"Well, I mean by the highest standards, Aunt Grace. I mean do I look all right to be with those— Oh, I guess I'll go. But you know sometimes I wonder if Orestes was ever cleansed from the guilt of killing his mother." She put her hands over her face suddenly. "I've killed my mother." Then she jerked her head up and said, "I'll see you at the station," smiling a little sad smile.

"Yes, dear, I'll be there."

Now she cleared her throat elaborately, blinking, her white fingers on her neck, and then she tried to speak in her bright laughing voice. "Before I go I want you to promise me not to be quite so productive. I think that one new baby a year is enough and remember—no more twins!"

"All right, darling," I said. "I'll do anything you say."

She laughed. "And if I should take to dope or drink, you can use me as a bad example to your growing children."

Then she ran out the door, her miserably fitting coat bunched out over the shoulders, the seam on top standing up like a tiny growth. She went straight to Fleta's, straight up the stiff walk and rang. A young girl admitted her.

"Is Mrs. Bope busy? Could I see her? Will you ask her if Vanessa Bodley can see her for a minute?"

The girl hesitated. "Mrs. Bope is very busy. Can't I have her telephone you?"

"Please ask her if she will see me for just a minute, not more than a minute."

"Well . . ."

"Tell her I'm going away this afternoon—to Chicago—for a long, long time——"

"All right. Just be seated," said the girl more willingly.

Fleta came into the room after half an hour. Vanessa said that her face was like gray stone. She had on a short white dress that exposed her firm youthful legs to the knee. On her head was a white crepe sport hat, turned up in front, the kind of hat that a doting mother would find in the débutante room of a large department store. She put out her hand, not smiling, and turned her face away as she stood under a large lamp with a stiff parchment shade. Vanessa kept looking into her face.

"I'm going to Chicago to-day."

Fleta glanced up. "Really, Vanessa? How wonderful!"

"Yes," she answered faintly.

The woman moved to the table and opened a little book. "Here," she said, "is a book by the author of 'A Light on the Pathway.' It is one of the most highly spiritualized studies I have ever seen. It is simply charged with higher significance."

"Oh, perhaps you don't care, but I'm getting an understanding of you, Fleta. I can almost say now what you really are——"

Fleta drew up her shoulders and started rapidly out of the room. "I have something to show you."

Vanessa told me that when Fleta said that, just as if there were still things she saved to show and explain to her, she felt as if her whole self burst open inside her. She crossed the floor into the studio and when Fleta handed her a photograph of a young man she held the picture without looking at it and gazed into Fleta's gray face under her jaunty youthful hat.

"He painted those things you used to like so much. It's Jerome."

"Is this what he looks like? Oh, I thought he would be different. He looks so kind of faint and chinless."

Fleta drew the photograph away. She folded it and laid it in a drawer. "Even so there is something very exquisite there." She stood near the window and looked out. "He has that deep respect for life."

"What is that?"

Fleta raised her face and looked straight ahead. "He has that kindliness of appraisal. He couldn't ever hurt any one. He would never be violent and destroy life or destroy a fine sensitive relationship. He has too deep a respect for the spirit—he is like my husband——"

"I'm not like that," said Vanessa. "I'm violent. I haven't politeness or respect or casualness."

Fleta gave a little laugh. "I'd never noticed. He always sees people as better and more noble than they really are. My husband is that way, too. His only suffering is that he will belittle some one, hurt some one, by not seeing what is noble and great and lovely in her."

"You mean that I don't! You mean that I am just the opposite and you're telling me in that roundabout way——"

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"Why, Vanessa, such a thought had never entered my head. You weren't in my thoughts at all. But you're always self-centred—always. It's so terribly disconcerting to be with you. I never know any more *what* you are imagining and attributing to me. No, really, I never know from day to day what vision you have conjured up and called me—me——"

"Oh, but when you love you want to know the person, you have to know what she is, what she is made of. Oh, you have to know all —all——"

"Of course. But when you can walk with a lovely radiant creature, why be aware only of the flaws and the small parts and the evil? Why not see the angel instead of the other, even though the other is there? Why do you waste your time denying the beauty to accept the ugliness? And you deny the celestial and radiant to brood over the animal part, the ugly part."

"No, that isn't the ugly part, it isn't!"

Fleta shrugged. "When I was a girl those theories about the body were just in vogue. It's time we had a change. It's too bad you can't be standing with those who are working for the next thing instead of waiting with the mass that— Oh, people are mad, they're mad."

"But does maturity mean telling lies? Does it mean you are able to? Oh, do you have to tell lies to adapt yourself to a larger, better world?"

"A lie is never an adjustment," Fleta said firmly.

"But what are you supposed to do? Do you have to pretend things?"

"I don't know what you're talking about, Vanessa. Pretence is always a vice. It's a waste of time."

"But—but—" she said miserably. "Oh, I hadn't planned it this way. I thought it would be different. I thought you would be and I would be and I would always—always remember—my last— Oh, Fleta!"

"Aren't there more important things in the world than ourselves?" said Fleta sternly. "Why must we talk about ourselves all the time?"

"So I can understand. Oh, so I can *know* for sure what you are. I do try to understand and accept it. I really do." Vanessa turned her face away and then she said suddenly, turning to the woman again, "If you would only tell me one thing I did that hurt you so that I could make it up and know that you cared."

"Why should you want to know that?"

Vanessa's lips came open, she backed away. "Oh, when you look so cold and hard I feel as if you may be on a plane with me and I can't"— she bent over swallowing, pressing her lips tightly—"I can't—I won't accept—that."

It was still. They heard the lawn-mower from outside. A bird sang. Fleta glanced out the window and then she turned. She clasped her hands in front of her and now that earnest strange look burned out of her cold face and she swept back a strand of hair into the coy white hat with the diamond pin in front.

"Twice you hurt me," she said very low. "That morning you wouldn't take Aunt Clackie the soup." She laid her fingers over her lips for a second. "You refused to see her reality. You accepted what was obvious and you didn't look for the other, the real part of her. I counted on you to give her something." She choked in her throat. "I counted on you to bring her that other message. She is hungry for the real things and the important things and it seemed as if you failed me then."

"Oh, but she didn't like me," murmured Vanessa. "She . . ."

Fleta looked at her sadly. "Liking doesn't matter, you know. It's what we can give." She glanced around the room and that boundless love came into her face as she looked at her possessions, the imitation mahogany, the manufactured antiques, the hideous lamps that stood forlorn and lonely like gaunt people in a wooden inarticulate universe. "And I wanted—to share—all this beauty with you. I wanted you to love it with me and tell me"—she paused and tears came into her eyes—"tell me that it is lovely."

Vanessa said that suddenly she felt uplifted, exalted, as if she understood everything in the world. She moved into the centre of the room and stared at the furniture until her eyes seemed washed of her personal vision. She stared until she felt blinded. Then she put out her arms and said to herself, "Oh, Vanessa, take this furniture into your mind, these walls, the flowers, the curtains. Take this day into your body, the trees bending over the opened windows, the soft day-air puffing and blowing, the great tufted foliage of bushes and plants below all smooth and deep. Take the breathing of the world into your breathing, relax and let this air of God puff slowly over your bones. Sink then, sink away, until only the bright spark of you is left, the burning star of you that travels the universe and can enter any house, any body, any heart——"

She turned quickly and now like a great tearing pain she saw Fleta's sharp little hat,

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her composed features, the complacent fall of her hands against the short skirt. It seemed to her in that moment of torment that her whole soul was breaking open and that she must ease it in the old way with stinging words that brought down burning tears and the momentary relief of weakness. She felt the dark giddiness coming over her and she knew that in another instant there would be no choice. But it seemed to her that she would die if she did not hurl out her revenge, her gigantic wound, and her lips slowly opened. Then in a second she bent her head, forcing her mouth shut, her hands clinched at her sides. And now the little hat, the skirt, and the ravaged, beautiful face—the hands, the body, the eternal spirit—were woven together in great pain. She bent lower, her eyes still closed, and she dropped to her knees as she had that day in the wood at the picnic, and touched her lips to the toe of Fleta's shoe. Then she stood up. She put out her hand, her eyes fully opened on Fleta.

"So you're going to Chicago!"

"Oh, Fleta—good-by—good-by——"

SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE *fiction holds many features in the coming months. A new short story by Ernest Hemingway will appear in the August number. July* SCRIBNER'S *will present stories by Kay Boyle, one of the most exquisite of our short-story writers, and David Burnham, author of "This Our Exile," a remarkable first novel. Each number will contain a short novel complete. The August* SCRIBNER'S *will have many unusual features including the first selections in our contest for true narratives of American life. This contest has already brought in more than 1,500 manuscripts and is bringing to light many interesting phases of civilization in the United States. Thomas Wolfe, Evelyn Scott, James Gould Cozzens, Edward Shenton, George Milburn, Caroline Gordon, Josephine Herbst, Zelda Fitzgerald, Margery Latimer, and Meridel Le Sueur will appear in early numbers.*

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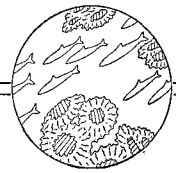

The Garden Set Apart

By EDWARD STRAVE

A GARDEN is compound of green and gold,
And all the matter of a rainbow
Decks the shadow and the light.
A garden is a lovely place
That stretches over lawns
With hedged and lonely paths
And vistas unimagined.
But gardens have a winter aspect
When all the beds are covered with what snow there is
And flowers do not bloom
And bushes are discerned against the snow
Like tracery of leaded windows.
And still this garden is a lovely place
That cannot be forgot
For all the sharp black twigs against the white
And all the coming green and gold
With fragments of the rainbow.

A bird alights
On the little branch of a tree
In the garden
And makes its little song.
Birds come and go with the seasons.

The winter is dead
And the warmth of spring and autumn and summer is remembered
And the coldness of the stars is forgotten.
A man stands alone,
Forgetting the warmth of gold and green
And the coldness of the night——

A man of bronze
With a black head
Modelled with intended symmetry,
Curved but not circle nor ellipse,
Not a globe nor an egg ridiculous,
But exactly of a size and a shape for the body to bear,
The bronze body with its ribs discernible
And the net of muscles of the belly appearing,
The line of the shoulders
Continued perfectly the length of the arms
Whose mould near the shoulder

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Has the occasional hollow and wave of a strong current,
The forearm like a tapering club
With lengthwise furrows on one side,
Knots of steel, close set, on the other
And a pattern of veins,
Dextrous hands to grasp;
The line of the body bulging a little at the ribs,
Bending in at the groin,
And continued perfectly the length of the legs
Whose mould at the thigh is round and smooth
(The muscles beneath the skin just perceptible)
Sloping to the iron knob of the knee
Which joins to the thigh the steel-strung calf,
Feet that are supple and deft; [the legs
(The black gothic window—imperfectly human—of the space between
Gives faith that the arch supports the tower of the body)
The shoulders and back relaxed but ready to awake,
The dark, fine head slightly bowed,
The troubled face
Confusedly lighted by a distant reflection.

He stands, gazing at nothing,
The figure of a man.

There is a hill nearby, like cardboard
Cut and painted by the indifferent hand of a child.
Changed from the full green of summer
(Whereof the leaves of different trees
Print an intricate lace on the solid sheen
Of the hill) now the velvet side
Has a bright and liquid verdancy
Next a warm red, streaked,
Next yellow, next ochre,
Next vermilion,
Next the all-blue sky.
(The gray stems of naked saplings
Soften the colors in places.)
A little lake stretches in sunlight,
Not heeding anything, unheeded.
There are empty houses on the shore
With big rooms and big chimneys.

The man moves as though to take action
And gazes again at something unseen.

There is a garden set apart,
With many prospects and many secret places.
The sound of many men speaking
And the noise of their games and strife
Fill the place,
And the same sounds come from afar
And different.

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(A blare reverberant
Dies instantly.)
The music of instruments
Strung with strings of fine metal,
And a choir of singing voices
Complain in melancholy
Against confusion's noise—
Lament for sweet things past
And pause a time
To take up anew
The gentle song of love remembered.
(The grating of tin and glass
Cuts the singing a second.)
The twilight diurnal
Suddenly covers
The twilight of trees
And moss and ferns—
Comes, a spirit unbidden,
Interpenetrating,
Immersing
The whole of the garden set apart,

Like a swift and stealthy stream between close shores,
Like a flung arrow that makes no sound,
A woman reclines on a bank, removed
And apart as the appearance of a dream.
Her body in the moonlight is a white flower
But seems to the eye less soft than touch reveals.
One leg is extended, the other a little crooked,
The lithe feet are free,
And the long lithe limbs to the thigh
Make straight curves that seem about to flow.
And from the break at the gentle thighs,
The long fair plain of the belly reaches smoothly
To the crown of the body,
The twin and half-spheres of the breasts,
Dim mounds in the moonlight,
Soft and firm to the hand and searching lips.
The kempt, dark hair glints like spray
And flows away from the head
And about the column of neck.
In the eyes are desire and a mystery not understandable,
Dark like sky before the dawn.

The presence of young bodies in sleep
Now fills the silence of the place.

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BEHIND THE SCENES

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

WILLIAM FAULKNER from his lair in Oxford, Miss., startled England with his novels, "Soldier's Pay," "The Sound and the Fury," and "As I Lay Dying." His fourth book, "Sanctuary," finally roused his own country to admiration and has become a best-seller. Mr. Faulkner, 38 years old, belongs to a distinguished family including governors, statesmen, generals; and one great-grandfather who wrote the popular romantic novel, "The White Rose of Memphis." During the War he became a lieutenant in the Canadian Flying Corps, an experience which provided material for many of his first short stories.

John Gould Fletcher has lived for many years in London, but has remained essentially American. He was born in Arkansas and makes frequent visits to this country. He was one of the explorers of the theories of *vers libre,* and achieved notable results, as in "Symphonies." Only in his latest volume, "The Black Rock," does his verse tend toward symmetrical form.

Clarence C. Little is director of the Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory at Bar Harbor, Maine, established for research into the causes of cancer. He has been interested in cancer since his Harvard University days, and took his D.Sc. in 1914. After aviation service in the World War, he worked with the Carnegie Institute's Station for Experimental Evolution. In 1922 he became president of the University of Maine, where his advanced educational ideas led to his being called to the presidency of the University of Michigan in 1925. A continued conflict of ideas resulted in his resignation in 1929. Almost immediately he was financed by five Detroit residents for his cancer research in Bar Harbor. His scientific reputation is international.

Dorothy Bennett is a young newspaper woman who has turned to fiction and verse writing only in the past two years. She is a graduate of the University of Southern California, and lives in Berkeley. As reporter and feature writer she worked on the San Francisco *Examiner* for six years.

No sooner had Carleton Beals won a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1931 than he rushed back to Mexico, whose people and dialects and remote valleys he knows well. He will prepare a biography of Porfirio Diaz, former President. In America he was educated at the University of California and at Columbia, and abroad at Universities of Mexico, Madrid, and Rome. "Mexico, An Interpretation" and "Rome or Death, the Story of Fascism" are two of his books.

As a doctor E. C. L. Adams is retired, but as a writer his activities continue and his interests extend. His "Congaree Sketches," first published in 1927, will be republished this fall together with some new stories. Parts of "Nigger to Nigger," 1928, appeared first in SCRIBNER'S. He is at work on other books. Born in South Carolina and educated there (and in Dublin, Ireland), he has spent a large part of his life in his native State. His ancestors there were Indian fighters and lieutenant-governors and such. He has served through two wars: the Spanish American as an enlisted man; as captain in the World War, battalion-surgeon of the 81st Division.

Frank R. Kent's article, "Charley Michelson," in September SCRIBNER'S turned out to be the only personality issue in the 1930 Congressional campaign. It inspired, on one side and the other, radio speeches and literally thousands of newspaper stories and editorials. Mr. Kent, vice-president and daily columnist of the Baltimore *Sun,* sees inside facts that others see, but he also sees their significance and relation to other facts. He has been on the newspaper end of the Great Game of Politics for thirty years, and has published four books about it.

Paul Rosenfeld, New York author and critic, has been connected with *The Dial* as music critic, "The American Caravan" as editor and contributor, the Dada publication, *391,* and with the Young American Movement. He was educated at Yale and Columbia Universities.

John Carter left college a member of the Yale Renaissance Group of 1920, but has recovered

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